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Fruits & Vegetables Galore

Helping Kids Eat More







Quality Food for Quality Meals

Buying Fruits and Vegetables





www.fns.usda.gov/tn

Source documents for *Quality Food for Quality Meals* include:

- *Choice Plus*, 1996, USDA Food and Consumer Service, Publication Number FCS-297
- *Fresh-2-You The Florida Way*, Florida Departments of Education and Agriculture
- *Fresh Produce Manual*, 2002, Produce Marketing Association
- *Foodservice Produce Guide*, 2001, Produce for Better Health Foundation
- *First Choice*, U.S. Department of Agriculture with the National Food Service Management Institute, 2002, 2nd Edition,
- Post harvest Web site, University of California at Davis, <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu>
- National Restaurant Association Web site, www.restaurant.org

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Quality Food for Quality Meals

You are a school foodservice professional.

This means you want to serve nutritious meals, satisfy your customers, and keep them coming back for more. You also want to give them opportunities to learn how to eat for good health.



This includes introducing them to new foods and encouraging them to eat more fruits and vegetables. To start the process, you need to purchase quality food—and then keep it safe from the time you receive it until you serve it.

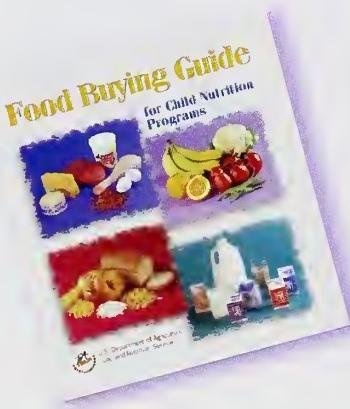
This booklet provides the information you need to do just that.



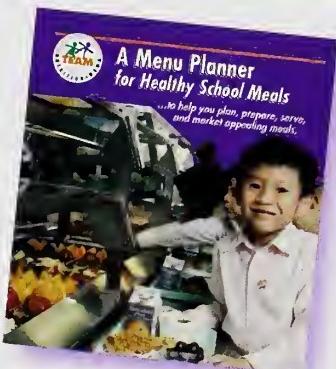
Buying for Quality

Whether you purchase food directly or your district does the buying, you want the highest quality products at the best price. Following these steps will help you reach that goal:

- Plan menus
- Determine products necessary to prepare meals from the menus
- Estimate quantities required
- Develop acquisition/critical path plan
- Develop quality standards
- Determine product movement policies
- Document purchasing process
- Analyze market and evaluate vendors
- Determine the purchasing system
- Issue request for prices
- Evaluate responses
- Select vendors
- Place orders
- Receive products
- Store products
- Prepare meals



USDA's *Food Buying Guide* and the *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* are two valuable tools that can assist you in the purchasing process. For more detailed purchasing guidance, go to the National Food Service Management Institute's Web site and review *First Choice*—www.nfsmi.org/Information/firstchoice/fcindex.html



What to Buy—and How Much

One of the first steps in the process is to determine what and how much to buy. Your answers to the following questions will help:

- The menu—what will you be serving?
- The recipes—how much of each ingredient will you need?
- Product on hand—what is already on site?
- Product on order—are orders already in place?
- Product yields (use the *Food Buying Guide* at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/FBG/buyingguide.html>)—how many servings will each item produce?
- Average meal consumption rate—how much product is usually consumed?
- Volume and type of storage available—how much dry and refrigerated storage can you use for additional product?
- Preparation space and equipment—which space and equipment will be used to prepare product?
- Labor—do you have enough people to do the work?
- Production schedule—are there conflicting demands?

Buying for Quality

Reviewing these factors will help you pinpoint the items and quantity you need. The next step is to determine the quality of product you want.

Developing Quality Standards

Developing quality standards (specifications, descriptions, or identifications) is the most difficult step in the purchasing process. It is also one of the most important, and it can be time consuming. To get the quality you need and want, you have to know how to ask for it. So you must provide a detailed and specific list of the characteristics you want in a food product. Then, when you receive the order, you have to make sure the food meets your descriptions and is in good condition.

One source of help in developing your specifications is USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). AMS maintains commercial item descriptions (CIDs) for hundreds of food items. A CID concisely describes the "salient characteristics"—such as the processing, ingredients, odor, flavor, color, texture, and analytical requirements—of each available, acceptable commercial product. To view the current CIDs, go to the AMS Web site at: www.ams.usda.gov/fqa/cids.htm.



Since this booklet focuses on buying high quality fruits and vegetables, here are specifications you may want to use when you order:

- quality of raw products
- maximum/minimum level of ripeness of fresh produce that will be acceptable
- processing methods and packaging materials you prefer
- USDA grade, Department of Commerce standard, or product packed to a USDA Grade
- size and variety of item
- how it should be shipped
- where it should be shipped
- appropriate shipping temperature
- any other specific information to ensure that you receive the highest quality products

You may specify that lettuce be a healthy green color with no loose leaves and no brown leaves. Such specifications can help guarantee that you receive fresh items. You can also specify the type of ripeness desired of certain produce. For example, tomatoes are typically available in six stages of ripeness. Select an appropriate degree of ripeness to avoid spoilage. If you don't plan to use all your tomatoes at once, you might want to specify that a certain amount be riper than others, so they don't all peak simultaneously.



Buying for Quality

In addition, there are a variety of laws and regulations that help ensure food quality and consistency. You'll find information about them in Appendix 1, "Laws, Standards, and Regulations." You can refer to these laws and regulations in your specifications.



Using Sample Food Product Sheets

This booklet contains sample food product sheets for a variety of fruits and vegetables commonly used in school meals. They provide examples of the kind of information to include as quality indicators and how to format information to communicate clearly. They do not present all of the possible combinations of quality indicators.

The sample product sheets are divided into separate sections for fruits and vegetables. They contain information on:

- Forms
- Sizes
- Grades
- Popular varieties
- How packed
- In season
- Purchasing tips
- Receiving
- Storing
- Standard of identity reference
- Grade standard reference
- Sample description

The "Nutrition Facts" panel on food labels for processed products can also be very useful. If you compare the labels on a variety of products, you will be able to decide which product offers the best value in quality and cost. In Appendix 2, "Nutrition Label," you'll find an illustration of a typical food label.

Product Descriptions

As you look through the sample product sheets, you will see that subheadings vary from food to food. This means the information you include in your product descriptions will also vary from food to food. **To get the best results, be as specific as possible.**

Here is an example of a product sheet on fresh apples. It includes some major subheadings you'll find in the fruit section of this guide, such as size, grade, popular varieties, how packed, and when in season. It also includes in italics some questions you might want to ask yourself as you make purchasing decisions, and some possible answers.

Buying for Quality

Look over this example; then compare it to the actual product sheet for "Apples, Fresh." Find the sample description at the end of the actual product sheet. Notice how it's written and think about how you would write your own description for apples. Also compare the sample description for "Apples, Fresh" to descriptions for other products. This will help you write product descriptions that will best meet your needs.

Name of Product Apples, Fresh	
Size	<i>Should I use both count and diameter in the description?</i> Generally vendors refer to apples by count; so only count size will be included.
<u>Decision</u>	You specify 113 count.
Grade	<i>There are two grade standards: "Washington State" and "All Other States."</i> <i>Which grade standard should I use?</i> The Purchasing Tip for "Apples, Fresh" states that 75% of apples are grown in Washington State.
<u>Decision</u>	You specify U.S. Fancy or Washington Fancy grade standard.
Popular Varieties	Thirteen are listed. <i>What do students prefer?</i> You find out your students prefer crisp apples served raw.
<u>Decision</u>	You specify Gala.
How Packed	<i>Do I specify how apples should be packed?</i>
<u>Decision</u>	Since fresh apples are packed only in 40-lb. cases, you don't have to supply information for this subheading.
In Season	<i>Do I need to specify months of purchase?</i>
<u>Decision</u>	Since apples are available year-round, it is not necessary to specify months of purchase.
Purchasing Tips	<i>Are there any additional considerations I should mention?</i>
<u>Decision</u>	No additional information listed under "Purchasing Tips" on the product sheet is important for this order.

Buying Fresh Produce

The short shelf life of fresh fruits and vegetables presents a special challenge. Careful handling from harvesting to serving is critical to maintaining their quality. To make the best purchasing decisions, you will need to have an understanding of the following concepts:

- **Grading and Standards**
- **Purchasing Options**
- **Ideal Storage**

Grading and Standards

Very few of the fresh fruits and vegetables sold in the United States are actually graded. They are termed “ungraded” or “unclassified.” However, USDA has established “grade standards,” and these can help you make wise purchasing decisions, communicate with vendors, and check for quality when you receive deliveries. By referring to grade standards in your product descriptions, you communicate in very specific terms what you want and what you expect to receive.

Many of the sample descriptions in this reference booklet mention Federal grade standards. Look, for example, at the sample description for fresh plums, which states: “to be packed to U.S. No.1 Grade standard.” This means the



Buying Fresh Produce

purchaser will accept ungraded product but expects it to meet the USDA grade standard defined in Federal regulations. Many schools choose this option to reduce product cost. This option works if you deal with reputable companies.

Most of the grade standards are Federal; however, there are also some State standards. These have been established by the main growing States for certain fruits and vegetables. In most cases, State standards are not defined in the Federal regulations. If a fresh fruit or vegetable is purchased under a State standard, it generally does not carry "U.S." in the name of the grade.

Because of differences in growing conditions, there are different standards for oranges and grapefruit grown in Arizona, California, Florida, and Texas. In addition to specific Federal standards, these states have developed State specific standards. To view the standards, visit www.ams.usda.gov/standards/stanfrfv.htm.

Organic Standards

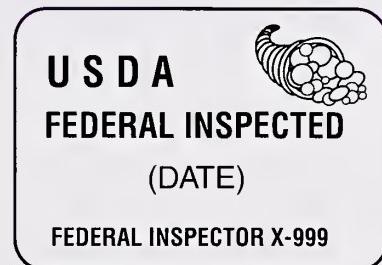
USDA has put in place a set of national standards that food must meet if it is labeled "organic," whether it is grown in the United States or imported.

Organic food differs from conventionally produced food in the way it is grown, handled, and processed. The "USDA ORGANIC" seal tells you that product is at least 95 percent organic. Because of the special growing conditions, these foods may be more costly. The Olympia Washington School District established an organic salad bar by implementing several cost saving changes. These included taking advantage of the latest commodity reimbursement increase; utilizing the Department of Defense purchasing option; eliminating desserts from their menu; and converting from a commercial pizza contract to an in-house production operation. With these changes, the district implemented an organic produce operation with a cost increase of only one-half of one percent of their previous costs. To view a full report of their actions, visit the Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn.

Purchasing Options

When buying fruits and vegetables, you—the purchaser—must consider a number of factors such as price, product selection (fresh, including fresh-cut product, canned, frozen), availability of product, reliability of the seller, delivery service (dry/refrigerated/frozen), delivery schedule, and service charges.

Specify that delivery charges be broken out separately in your bids to help you evaluate the true cost of products. The following information covers the variety of purchasing options generally available. In rural areas, schools may have more limited vendor and product selection. The sections on "Farmers Markets" and "Department of Defense (DOD) Purchasing" relate only to purchases of fresh fruits and vegetables.



Buying Fresh Produce

Distributors

Most school food products are purchased through distributors. A distributor is a professional at food purchasing, warehousing, sales, and delivery of a perishable product. Distributors can be classified into the following categories:

- **Full or broad line** means that they carry almost all food, supply, and equipment items necessary to operate a kitchen.
- **Specialty wholesalers** are companies that specialize in a particular product category such as fresh produce.
- **Systems distributors** are companies that deliver products to national restaurant chains. The chains purchase exclusive products for their restaurants, and the systems distributors deliver them. Systems distributors do not maintain inventories or sell product. When a restaurant chain sells, files for bankruptcy, or changes distribution, the systems distributor may lose a significant portion of its business volume and some products may no longer be available. Schools should be aware of special breed distributors as potential vendors.

School/District Purchasing Co-ops

Schools and/or districts may form purchasing cooperatives to increase their buying power, attract more bidders, and receive more competitive prices. Depending on the size of the cooperative and its distribution system, it may be possible to purchase directly from food companies and further reduce costs.

Farmers Markets

Local farmers and farmers markets offer another source of fresh produce for schools. By working with local producers, schools receive products closer to harvest time, and school food purchases directly support the local economy.



To explore this option further, you may want to visit the Community Food Security Coalition Web site at www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_school.html. Some schools have found that purchasing directly from small farmers results in multiple small invoices and have worked with the farmers market organization to act as a single vendor and consolidate orders. Other issues to consider when ordering from individual farmers are consistency of product quality, handling procedures, and food safety.

Buying Fresh Produce

Department of Defense (DOD) Purchasing

USDA has established a partnership with the DOD, Defense Supply Center Philadelphia (DSCP) Produce Business Unit to provide another purchasing option for schools, school food authorities, and State agencies. Through this partnership, DSCP will buy and distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to schools using the USDA commodity entitlement dollars or the State's Section 4 and Section 11 funds, which support the school meal programs. DSCP Produce Business Unit uses a diverse network of produce suppliers, mostly small businesses, to distribute over 300 produce items to schools at the place and time the schools designate.

Emphasis is placed on using as much local produce from nearby producers and suppliers as possible, pending satisfactory inspection of their facilities. You can work with DSCP to specify local products and it can ensure consistent, wholesome product from a variety of local vendors on a single invoice. You pay a service fee to cover a percentage of DSCP's operational costs. To explore this purchasing option, work with your school food authority to contact the State agency and establish a purchasing account. To learn more about the DSCP operation, visit the School Days News Web site at www.dscp.dla.mil/subs/produce/school.htm.



Supermarket or Wholesale Clubs

These outlets may be appropriate purchasing options for small residential centers participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and for small fill-in purchases. The disadvantage is that purchases are cash and carry. However, if the product is not delivered, the price is competitive.



Buying Fresh Produce

For a more extensive discussion of the purchasing process and the food distribution chain from grower to school, refer to *First Choice*, 2nd Edition, Chapter 3, "The Marketplace Environment," pages 29 to 41 on the National Food Service Management Institute Web site at: www.nfsmi.org/Information/firstchoice/chapter3.pdf.

Ideal Storage

"Farm fresh" fruits and vegetables are the kind everyone wants. However, only schools purchasing directly from local farmers or farmers markets get fresh fruits and vegetables straight from the farm. All other produce must be stored at some point as it moves from producer to the school. Ideal storage preserves as much of the farm freshness as possible.

Look for vendors that deliver produce at the level of freshness you expect. Also look for ways your schools can protect quality and freshness once the produce arrives. Keep in mind the following storage principles:

Ideal storage provides:

- The temperature and humidity that are best for the specific fruits or vegetables being stored. See Appendix 4, "Ideal Storage Temperatures."
- Enough space to allow air to circulate.
- Separation of those fruits and vegetables that give off odors. These items—for example, onions, garlic, shallots, green onions—may be placed in plastic bags or stored outside of the refrigerator.
- Foodservice operations that have only one refrigeration unit do not necessarily have the luxury of storing produce at "ideal" temperatures. If you do not have "ideal" storage in your schools, remember these storage tips:
 - The produce that requires the lowest temperature should go on the bottom shelf and in the back of the refrigerator. **Caution:** Do not store raw meat above ready-to-eat foods.
 - Produce that tolerates a warmer temperature can be stored nearest to the door.



Buying Fresh Produce

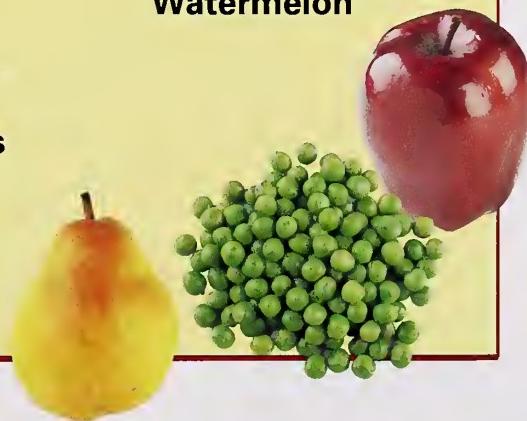
Some fruits must be ripe before they are refrigerated. If they are not ripe when you receive them, keep them at room temperature to ripen, then place them in the refrigerator. These fruits include avocados, kiwifruit, nectarines, peaches, pears, and plums. They should be stored in air-conditioned space to ripen.

Never store produce in space that is not air-conditioned. Ideal room temperature is 60°F to 70°F for bananas, sweet potatoes, potatoes, tomatoes, dry onion, and unripened fruits. *Never refrigerate bananas and tomatoes.*

Ideal storage conditions also keep the ethylene-producing fruits separated from the ethylene-sensitive vegetables. This is the simplest approach to produce storage. The following lists will show you the ethylene producers and the fruits and vegetables most sensitive to ethylene. The produce listed with an asterisk (*) denotes those that are both ethylene producers and ethylene sensitive.



Ethylene Producers		Ethylene Sensitive	
Apples*	Nectarines*	Belgian Endive	Parsley
Apricots*	Papayas*	Broccoli	Peas
Asparagus*	Passion fruit*	Brussels Sprouts	Peppers
Avocado*	Peaches*	Cabbage	Spinach
Bananas*	Pears*	Carrots	Squash
Cantaloupes	Persimmons	Cauliflower	Sweet Potatoes
Cherimoya*	Plantains	Cucumbers	Watercress
Figs	Plums	Eggplant	Watermelon
Guava	Prunes	Green Beans	
Honeydew Melons	Quince	Leafy Greens	
Kiwifruit	Rambutan*	Lettuce	
Mangos	Tomatoes*	Okra	



Buying Fresh Produce



If stored near ethylene producing fruits:

- Broccoli turns yellow and florets separate; develops off-flavor.
- Cabbage turns yellow; leaves separate.
- Carrots develop a bitter flavor.
- Cauliflower turns yellow; leaves separate and turn brown.
- Cucumbers soften.
- Green beans turn yellow.
- Lettuce browns; develops rust spots.
- Potatoes sprout.
- Summer squash softens.
- Sweet potatoes turn brown; develop off-flavor.
- Turnips become tough.



If you see any of these symptoms you have four options:

1. Talk with your supplier. Often ethylene exposure occurs during the shipping and storage process before you receive the product.
2. Have more frequent deliveries to reduce the need to store product.
3. Use ethylene-damage-sensitive produce first, within a day or two of receipt.
4. Investigate the use of commercially available ethylene scrubbers.

For more information on storage and handling of fresh produce, visit the University of California at Davis Web site at: <http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu>.



Using Fresh-Cut Produce

Fresh-cut (or pre-cut) produce is any fresh fruit or vegetable or combination that undergoes further processing from its original state. The labor and packaging required to process pre-cut fresh produce add value to the end user; both also add to the cost.

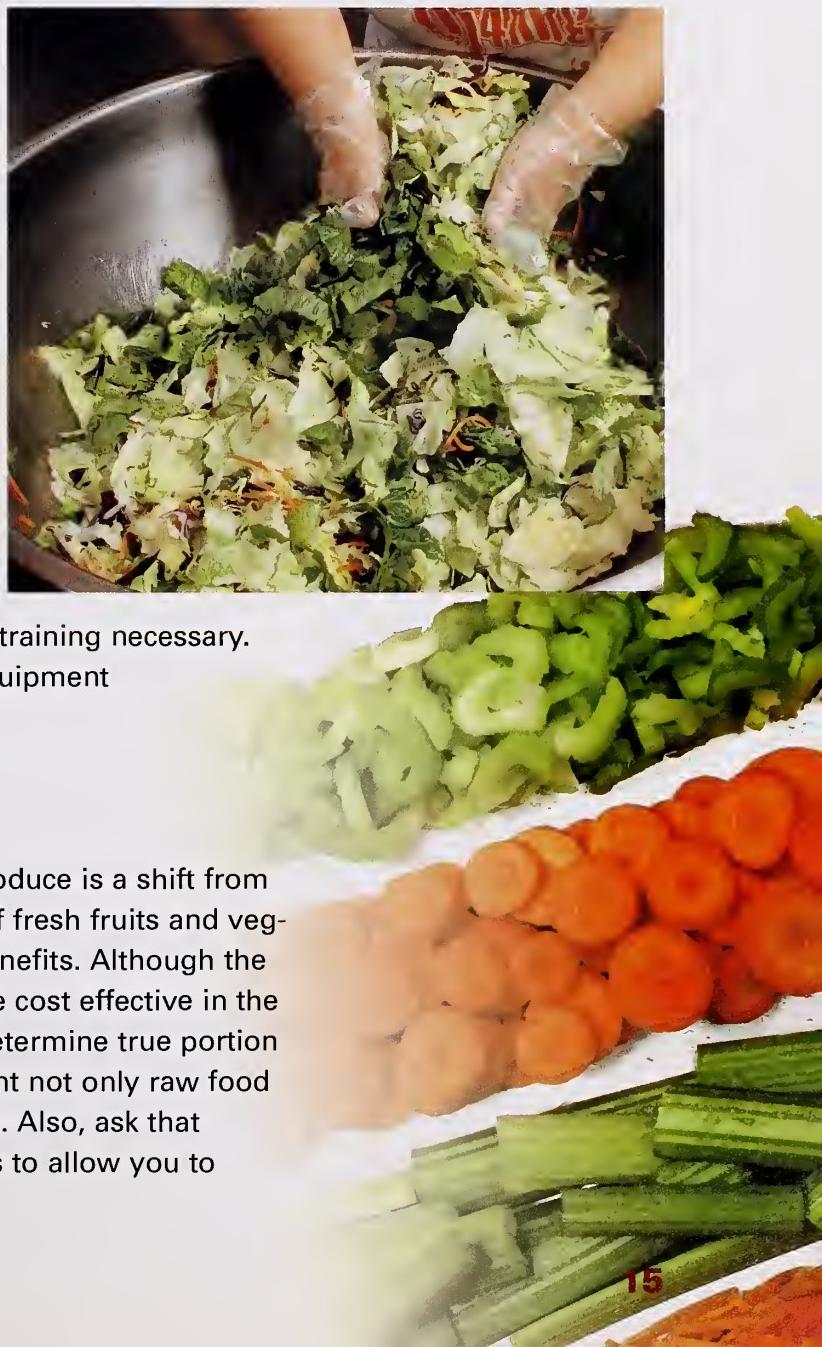
Advantages of Fresh-Cut

The buyer gains convenience and other advantages:

- Portion control and consistent yield—there is very little variance in the product.
- Labor savings—minor preparation time is needed.
- Reduced waste—entire product is usable, reducing waste and disposal costs.
- Reduced storage space—packaging takes less storage space and is easier to manage.
- Product uniformity—ensures all your customers get equivalent product.
- Reduced delivery frequency—product is easier to manage and predict and has a longer shelf life if stored between 32°F and 40°F.
- Consistent supply, quality, price—available year-round.
- Reduced training requirements—little or no preparation training necessary.
- Reduced equipment—eliminates need for processing equipment in the kitchen.
- Time—eliminates extensive preparation time.

Cost Comparison

For these conveniences, you pay more. Buying pre-cut produce is a shift from the traditional bulk purchasing and in-house processing of fresh fruits and vegetables and requires a careful analysis of the costs and benefits. Although the purchase cost of this produce is higher, it may prove more cost effective in the long run. To do an accurate cost comparison, you must determine true portion cost of pre-cut versus bulk. This means taking into account not only raw food product cost, but also labor cost, indirect costs, and yields. Also, ask that vendor pricing separate product cost and delivery charges to allow you to better evaluate your true costs.



Using Fresh-Cut

Food Safety Issues

What can you do to ensure food safety when you buy pre-cut fresh produce?

The first step is to deal only with reputable companies that follow and monitor strict food safety regulations. If the plant is within traveling distance, you may want to visit it. If a visit is not possible, ask detailed questions. You want to buy from a licensed company with all required permits that follows these food safety procedures:

1. Uses high quality raw products.
2. Uses containers that are clean and sturdy enough to protect during shipping.
3. Ships products in refrigerated trucks at temperatures between 32°F and 40°F. (The shelf life of fresh cut product stored at 41°F or above is cut in half.)
4. Follows good processing methods and procedures. This means:
 - All ingredients are kept clean and cold throughout processing.
 - There are no open doors or windows in the plant.
 - Overhead fixtures are clean and free of debris.
 - Employee lockers, bathrooms, and eating areas are separate from processing area.
 - Knives and cutting machines are sharp and clean.
 - Chilled water is used to wash produce.
 - Wash water is chlorinated at a level of 50 to 100 ppm (parts per million).
 - Packaging materials are gas permeable to ensure 2 percent oxygen.
 - Inventory and storage procedures ensure no break in cold chain from processor to user.
 - Plant uses code dating and rotation of product.
5. Follows a good, ongoing food safety program with documentation, which includes among other things:
 - All employees wear hair restraints and rubber gloves.
 - There are good basic housekeeping practices in place.
 - Good marks on health department inspection reports.
6. Follows good distribution policies that include the following procedures:
 - Produce does not spend too much time in transit.
 - Produce is kept at temperatures that protect freshness and ensure safety.
 - Deliveries are frequent.

The way vendors and distributors handle, ship, and distribute fresh produce is important. Find out what happens to your orders before they reach you. This information can help you serve fruits and vegetables when they taste best and offer the most nutritional value.

Using Fresh-Cut

USDA Food Safety Assurance Service

USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) offers its Qualified Through Verification (QTV) as a voluntary user-fee service to vendors. Under QTV, AMS experts work with company management to validate the facility's hazard analysis critical control point plan (HACCP) and, through on-site audits, verify its effectiveness. HACCP is a scientific, analytical, and economical approach to ensure food is safe and wholesome. QTV is presently applied only to the fresh-cut fruit and vegetable industry. You may want to seek vendors that use QTV or have their own HACCP plan in place.



Shelf Life

To buy fresh produce and use it in a timely way, you want to know:

1. What the vendor says its shelf life is;
2. How many days it has spent in transit to a distributor;
3. How long the distributor has kept it in storage.

This allows you to determine the product's remaining shelf life once it reaches your school. As the following example shows, this can be considerably less than the initial shelf life quoted by the vendor.

Example:

A vendor quotes a shelf life of 14 days and a maximum shipping time of 3 days. The distributor keeps the product in inventory a maximum of 3 days. The school gets Monday and Thursday delivery. The school's maximum inventory time is 4 days.

To determine the product's remaining shelf life:

1. Note the shelf life in number of days as quoted by processor.
2. Subtract maximum shipping time from processor to distributor.
3. Subtract distributor safety stock time (inventory time).
4. Subtract the school site safety stock time (inventory time).

Using this formula as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{14 days shelf life} \\ & - 3 \text{ days shipping} \\ & - 3 \text{ days distributor's inventory time} \\ & - 4 \text{ days school's inventory time} \\ & = 4 \text{ days maximum remaining shelf time} \end{aligned}$$

It is important to note that if the product is exposed to warm temperatures, its maximum shelf life can be further reduced by 50 percent—in this example, to 2 days.

Note:

Grading standards are given at the time the product is packed. Depending on storage and handling, it may not meet that grading standard when you receive it.



Buying Processed Fruits and Vegetables

Once again, it pays to be specific in your product descriptions. Referring to quality standards is a good starting point.

Grades and Grade Standards

Just as it has established grade standards for fresh produce, USDA has set quality standards for most processed fruits and vegetables. Each standard (or grade) for canned or frozen fruits or vegetables is based on flavor, odor, color, uniformity of size, number of defects, texture, and other characteristics specific to the food.

USDA does not require processors to have their fruit and vegetable products graded. Grading and inspection services are provided by USDA on a fee-for-service basis. Under this service, USDA inspectors can grade products on the production line or by lots after processing. In return for the fee, the purchaser receives a grade certificate—which would assure schools that the product they receive is the grade they requested. Buyers may also choose to specify product “packed to USDA Grade B” or other level standard rather than requiring a USDA-graded product. This would let the seller know the level of quality you expect without the additional cost of USDA grading. Purchasers must buy very large quantities to justify grading certificates, and schools rarely do this.



Buying Processed

Another reasonable alternative for schools and other smaller volume purchasers is to rely on the reputation of private labels, which are based on the Federal grade standards. Here's how private labels work and how they relate to the Federal standards:

Many distributors belong to a buying group or have the support of a corporate purchasing department. Each group has standards for its first, second, and third quality labels. Products sold under each label are color-coded or have a unique logo. School foodservice purchasers who know these codes can order the quality they desire.

Distributors will provide a chart showing their labels for various products and grades. The first, second, and third quality labels are based on Federal grade standards. USDA has taken the leadership role in developing these standards in cooperation with private industry. The following chart shows the Federal grade standards and the private label equivalent:

Grade standards for fruits:

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy	=	First quality private label
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice*	=	Second quality private label
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard	=	Third quality private label



Grade standards for vegetables:

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy	=	First quality private label
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard	=	Second quality private label
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard	=	Third quality private label

*The majority of private label groups pack "choice" grade of peaches, pears, and fruit cocktail under the first quality label. For more information, refer to *First Choice*, 2nd Edition, Appendix 11, pages 227 to 230 on the National Food Service Management Institute Web site at www.nfsmi.org/Information/firstchoice/appendix11.pdf.

Buying Processed

Product Specifications

Just as with fresh produce, your specifications for processed products must clearly state the product you want and the acceptable conditions for delivery. For example:

Sample Specification Bid

Peaches, Cling

Purchase Unit: Number 10 can, 6 cans per case

Style: Halves, Slices

Type: Yellow, Cling

Grade: Packed to U.S. Grade B (Choice)

Count: 36 to 54 Halves

Packing Medium: Light Syrup

Net weight: 108 ounces

Drained Weight: 66 ounces



Food Safety

Food safety starts long before meals are prepared and served. For fruits and vegetables, it begins with the preparation of the soil, the seeds that are used, and everything placed on or around the plant while it is growing, harvested, and stored. Beyond production and processing, food storage and temperature control and delivery affect food safety, as well as your procedures for handling food once it arrives at your school. The final responsibility for the safety of the food entering your school rests with you.

Food supplies in the United States are the safest in the world. To learn about how our Federal, State, and local agencies provide a food safety system go to www.foodsafety.gov. Here you can find a variety of information about current laws and practices designed to ensure the safety of the country's food supply.

Irradiation

Irradiation is one of many processes that can be used to prevent foodborne illness. Irradiated food products have been exposed to radiant energy—such as gamma rays, electron beams, or x rays—in amounts approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This process is not a substitute for good growing and manufacturing practices. In 1986, fruit and vegetable irradiation was approved for insect control and to increase shelf life. Irradiation of herbs and spices was approved in 1986 for the purpose of sterilization.

Food irradiation can reduce the risk of foodborne illness by destroying harmful bacteria, parasites, insects, and fungi. Irradiation does not destroy all pathogens, but does reduce their number. A distinctive logo developed for use on food packaging identifies the product as irradiated. The symbol is called the "radura" and is used internationally.

For additional information on irradiation, visit USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Web site at www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/topics/irrmenu.htm.



The Radura

Food Safety



Screening Vendors

For your own program, ordering appropriate amounts of products and using approved suppliers are the initial steps in the food safety process. First, closely track your inventory and your sales so that you order only what you need. Then carefully consider suppliers. Choosing a supplier that can deliver safe food is the ultimate goal. See Appendix 3, "Review the Potential Distributor Vendor." Before accepting any deliveries from a supplier, make sure that the food purchased comes from approved sources. Also, check suppliers to see whether they meet or exceed the food safety standards you follow in your school. Be sure to address this issue when you purchase from local farmers and farmers markets.

Here are some guidelines to consider when you are selecting a supplier:

- Make sure suppliers are getting their products from licensed, reputable sources. Check with your regulatory agency to find out if your suppliers have had any food safety problems or health code violations. Ask other operators about their experiences with a particular supplier.
- If possible, inspect your supplier's warehouse or plant from time to time. See if it is clean and well run. This may be done at the district level if purchasing is done centrally.
- Ask your suppliers if they have a HACCP program in place. If they supply fresh produce, ask whether they have a Good Agricultural Practices Plan. If not, ask what precautions or procedures they take to ensure product safety.
- Find out if your supplier's employees are trained in food safety.

Food Safety

- Check the condition of the supplier's delivery trucks. Are they clean and well maintained? Do they hold refrigerated or frozen products at the proper temperatures? Are raw products separated from processed food and fresh produce?
- Check your supplier's shipments for consistent product quality. Inspect deliveries for unsafe packaging. Broken boxes, leaky packages, or dented cans are signs of careless handling.
- Ask suppliers to deliver products when your staff has time to receive them properly.
- Inspect each product for temperature, quality, and freshness as it arrives.
- Use all your senses to check for freshness—look, smell, feel, and even taste the product. Make sure the item meets your purchase specifications. Randomly examine the entire contents of a box rather than just the items on the top. Check product dates.
- As part of your receiving practices, check that refrigerated items arrive at proper temperatures, usually between 32°F and 40°F.
- If a product does not meet your standards of freshness, refuse to accept it.

Think about your past experiences with suppliers.

- Have they been generally good or bad? How might the less-than-satisfactory experiences be improved?
- Many school systems have limited access to suppliers, but this information can help you work with available suppliers to improve their operation and the quality of the products you receive from them.

You may want to add separate food safety requirements as a “Special Instructions” section on your Invitation for Bids or Request for Proposals. The recommended language is on page 24.

Food Safety

Food Safety—Special Instructions

- The school food authority (SFA) reserves the right to inspect potential vendor's receiving, storage, staging areas, and delivery vehicles.
- All frozen, chilled, and dry foods shall be maintained at the appropriate temperature during receiving, storage, staging, and delivery. All foods delivered shall be free from evidence of temperature abuse.
- Potential vendors must maintain clean, pest-free storage areas and delivery vehicles.
- The school (SFA) reserves the right to request information about potential vendor's pest control in food storage areas and delivery vehicles. **All** chemicals used shall be certified as safe for use around food.
- In accordance with Federal law **all** food containers shall contain the name and address of the manufacturer/processor or the distributor.
- The potential distributor shall provide the school (SFA) with its procedures that assure it purchases food only from those manufacturers that comply with **all** Federal/State food safety laws and regulations.
- Product protection guarantees: For product safety, schools (SFAs) have "automatic" product protection recourse against suppliers. The supplier whose name and address appear on the package is the responsible party. Suppliers are expected to take immediate action to correct any situation in which product integrity is violated.
- The potential distributor shall follow procedures of a First-In, First-Out (FIFO) stock rotation system.
- Dented cans, boxes with leaks, or other damaged product shall not be delivered to the school (SFA).
- If requested, vendors shall supply instructions on how to read the code date on delivered products.
- Distributors must receive and deliver **all** products to schools in accordance with the Sanitary Food Transportation Act of 1990. Go to www.fda.gov/opacom/laws/sftact.htm.
- Ice used to cool food shall be made from water safe for drinking and shall not be in contact with food containers that could absorb water from melted ice.

Storing Foods

Proper storage methods can lengthen a product's shelf life. They can also prompt you to use the items received first before using new arrivals. Rotating your stock in this fashion helps reduce spoilage.

- Mark each item with the date it was received. You can use magic markers, grease pencils, different color stamps, or a date stamp—whatever works best for your operation.
- Use the First-In, First-Out (FIFO) storage method. Shelve new items behind the stock you already have. Once items have been properly shelved, use items stored in the front first. This ensures that you use the lettuce that arrived on Monday before the lettuce you received on Wednesday.
- Pay special attention to fresh produce to ensure freshness. Discard any wilted or discolored product immediately.
- Manage inventory to use fresh product at its peak.
- Check and record refrigerator temperatures at least twice a day.
- Refrigeration units do not cool by cold temperatures alone. When placing foods in a refrigerator, allow sufficient space between packages for air circulation, and keep items away from the inside walls. Do not store foods directly on the floor of a walk-in cooler.
- Store cooked and ready-to-eat foods separately from raw meats, poultry, and seafood whenever possible.
- Store all raw and ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables above raw meats, poultry and seafood to prevent raw product juices from dripping onto food that will be eaten without further preparation.

Using Foods

Reducing spoilage takes constant vigilance. Build the following practices into your daily procedures for using food:

- Make sure employees always check the use-by or expiration date on products. Discard products if the use-by or expiration date has passed.
- Check inventory of most foods on a daily basis so that you will know how much shelf life they have left.
- If you realize that you have an excess amount of a particular item, develop a daily special that uses the product before it spoils.



Food Safety

- Check that cold foods are held at 41°F or below and hot foods are maintained at or above 140°F. The FDA Food Code indicates that potentially hazardous foods may be held between 41°F and 140°F for no longer than a total of 4 hours. After 4 hours, the product must be discarded.
- To deter bacterial growth, pre-cool hot items before storing them in a refrigerator by using chill blasters, cooling wands, and ice baths. If hot food must be cooled in the refrigerator, divide the food into small shallow batches to quicken the cooling process.
- Despite your best efforts, some items will start to go bad. If you are trying to determine whether something is usable, remember the classic adage—when in doubt, throw it out.

Serving health-smart meals begins with you, the purchaser.





Fruit
Product Sheets

Source:

These product sheets were taken from Choice Plus, Publication Number FCS-297, a joint publication of USDA and the National Food Service Management Institute at The University of Mississippi.

*Information on product sheets indicated by * is used by USDA with the express written consent of the publishers.



Produce Marketing
Association

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Produce Marketing Association, P.O. Box 6036, Newark, DE 19714-6036, (302) 738-7100, www.pma.com

Apples

FRESH

Grades

Washington State

Washington Extra Fancy
Washington Fancy

All Other States

U.S. Extra Fancy
U.S. Fancy
U.S. No. 1
 U.S. No. 1 Early – meets standard for U.S.
 No. 1 but no color requirement
 U.S. No. 1 Hail – meets standard for U.S.
 No. 1 except for hail marks on skin
U.S. Utility

Combination Grades

 U.S. Extra Fancy and U.S. Fancy
 U.S. Fancy and U.S. No. 1

Unclassified (ungraded)

Grade differences are based primarily on external appearance.

Popular Varieties

Fuji	McIntosh
Gala	Red Delicious
Golden Delicious	Rome Beauty
Granny Smith	Stayman
Idared	Winesap
Janagold	York
Jonathan	

How Packed

40-lb case

In Season

Available year-round, either fresh or from cold storage

Purchasing Tips

- Grading standard of Washington State, where 75% of apples on the market are grown, is used more frequently than U.S. standard.
- Buy apples by count. "Minimum" beside the count means apples are sized as marked or larger.
- Decay developed after storage or in transit affects condition, not grade.

- Apples are washed after harvesting, which removes the natural wax that preserves their shelf life. A food wax is used on the apples to replace the natural wax.
- All apples except "organic apples" have wax added.



Receiving

- Inspect fruit for ripeness; should be firm, crisp, juicy, flavorful; with smooth skin and color typical of variety.
- Reject fruit with bruised or broken skin.

Storing

- Store in refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Keep apples in cartons with lids closed; keep away from strong-flavored and ethylene-sensitive vegetables. Apples absorb odors, give off odors, and produce ethylene gas.
- Typical shelf life is 90 to 240 days if stored under ideal conditions.

Preparation Tips

Wash apples in water the same temperature as the apple to prevent the wax from becoming milky or cloudy.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.300 to 51.306

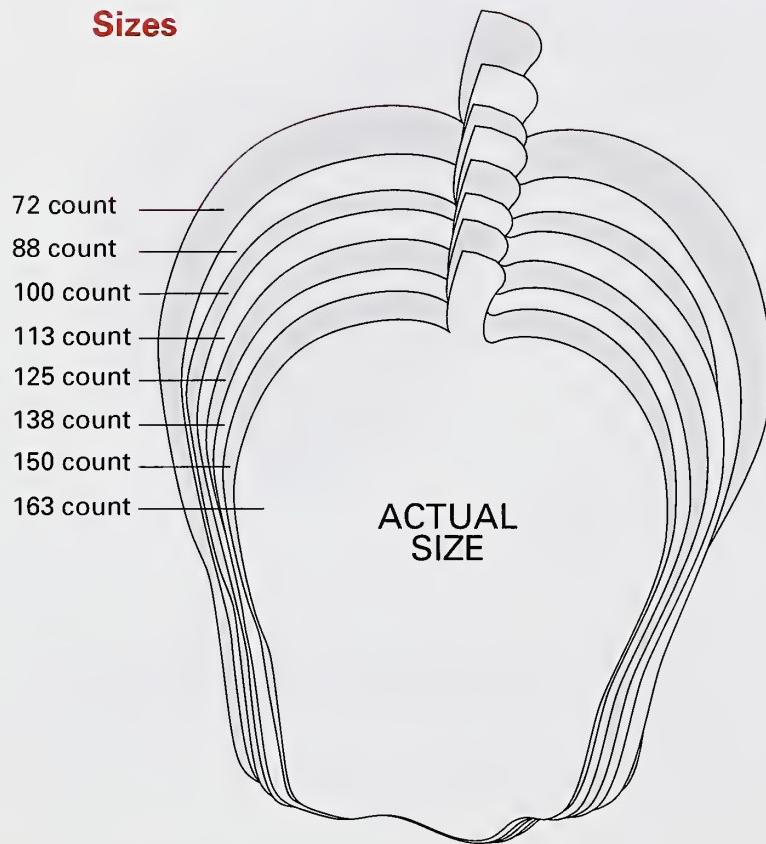
Sample Description

APPLES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Fancy Grade standard; Golden Delicious; 100 count.

Apples

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Sizes



Count Size (Number in standard 40-lb box)	Diameter (in inches)
72	3 1/2
88	3 1/4
100	3 1/8
113	3
125	2 7/8
138	2 3/4
150	2 5/8
163	2 1/2

Apples

CANNED

Forms

Sliced

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard
(There is no Grade B standard.)

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Minimum drained weight 96 oz per can.
- Fruit packed with or without any of the following: Water, salt, spices, nutritive sweetening ingredients (e.g., sugar, corn syrup, dextrose), and other ingredients permitted by U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. Product description may state, "no added sugar."
- Solid pack means minimal liquid; most canned apples are solid pack.
- Other apple products available but without a standard of identity or grade standard are apple chips for cobblers and whole apples for baked apples.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.2163

Sample Description

APPLES, CANNED: sliced; to be packed to U.S. Grade C standard; solid pack; 6/10.

Applesauce

CANNED

Forms

Color

Natural

Artificially colored



Flavor

Natural

Flavored

Spiced

Texture

Regular (granular)

Chunky

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy

U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice

Substandard

(There is no Grade C standard.)

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Net and drained weight are the same; that is, 108 oz.
- Sweetness determines grade and use of product.
- Grade A color, consistency, and flavor recommended for customer acceptance.
- Best applesauce blends several apple varieties to achieve best color, flavor, and consistency.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 145.110

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.337

Sample Description

APPLESAUCE, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; natural color; natural flavor; unsweetened; regular form or style; 6/10.

Apricots

FRESH

Sizes

Medium: 16 per lb

Large: 14 per lb

Extra large: 12 per lb

Jumbo: 10 per lb

Extra jumbo: 8 per lb

84 count per tray pack

96 count per tray pack

108 count per tray pack



Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

Popular Varieties

Blenheim

Castlebrite (early variety)

Improved Flaming Gold

Katy

Modesto

Patterson

Perfection

Tilton (late variety)

Tracy

Westley

How Packed

24-lb lugs, with count per 1 lb stamped on exterior
2- or 3-layer tray pack, count as listed under sizes

In Season

- May through August
- Peak season: Mid-May and June
- Imports (Chile and southern hemisphere): November through February

Purchasing Tips

- Most fruit packed 96-count tray pack.
- Fruit should be plump, golden orange color.
- Ripe fruit is fairly firm to slightly soft, will yield to slight pressure.

Apricots

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Receiving

- Inspect fruit for ripeness.
- Reject fruit that is pale yellow or greenish yellow; has dark soft spots, shriveled or broken skin; or is overripe.

Storing

- Refrigerate ripe fruit immediately – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Store under-ripe fruit at room temperature.
- Handle carefully; fruit bruises and scars easily.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2925 to 51.2926

Sample Description

APRICOTS, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; 96/count only.

Avocados*

FRESH

Sizes:

California: 36, 40, 48, 60 70 and 84 count
Florida: 6,7,8,9,10,12,14,16, 18, 20, and 24 count

Grades:

California:

No U.S. grades given. Generally ordered as #1 or #2.

Florida:

U.S. No. 1
U.S. No. 2
U.S. Combination

Ungraded avocados are called "unclassified."

Popular Varieties:

Bacon
Florida
Fuerte
Gwen
Hass
Pinkerton
Reed
Zutano



How Packed

California:

Single-layer, 12 1/2 lb. flats
2-layer, 25-lb. lugs
25-lb. volume-fill boxes
37 1/2-lb. RCP's
60 = 90 count
48 = 72 count

Florida:

Single-layer, 13 1/2-lb. flats
2-layer, 27 1/2-lb. lugs
35-lb. cartons
10-lb. natural packs

In Season

Available year-round

Avocados

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Purchasing Tips

- Ordering preconditioned avocados will help prevent unseen ripening.

Receiving

- Inspect fruit for ripeness.
- All varieties should be free of bruises and hard or soft spots.
- Ripe avocados should yield to gentle pressure. Pulp color and texture should be consistent with variety and free of any dark spots or streaks.

Storing

- Store unripe fruit at room temperature.
- Refrigerate ripe fruit.
- Handle carefully; fruit bruises easily.

Standard of Identity

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3050 to 51.3069

Sample Description

AVOCADOS/ FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No 1 Grade standard; domestic product to be provided when available; to be packed in single-layer flats; 36 count.



Bananas

FRESH

Sizes

Regular
Petite



Grades

No U.S. Grade standard
Companies establish their own grade standard

Popular Varieties

Cavendish

How Packed

40-lb box or carton
regular 100 to 120 count per carton; petite 150 count per carton (may be called portion pack)

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Specify regular or petite.
- Order by degree of ripeness:

Receiving

- Inspect fruit for ripeness ordered.
- Look for plump fruit; refuse fruit with broken skin, soft spots, or grayish yellow color indicating chill damage.

Storing

- To ripen bananas quickly, store in packing box to trap ethylene gas.
- For slow ripening, open carton and allow ethylene gas to escape; stack crisscross.
- Store in cool area; avoid drafts, heating vents, and motors.
- If bananas aren't used by the time they reach desired degree of ripeness, they may be stored in refrigerator. Skin will turn black but fruit remains edible.
- Average shelf life is 3 to 7 days, depending on temperature and storage conditions.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Bananas

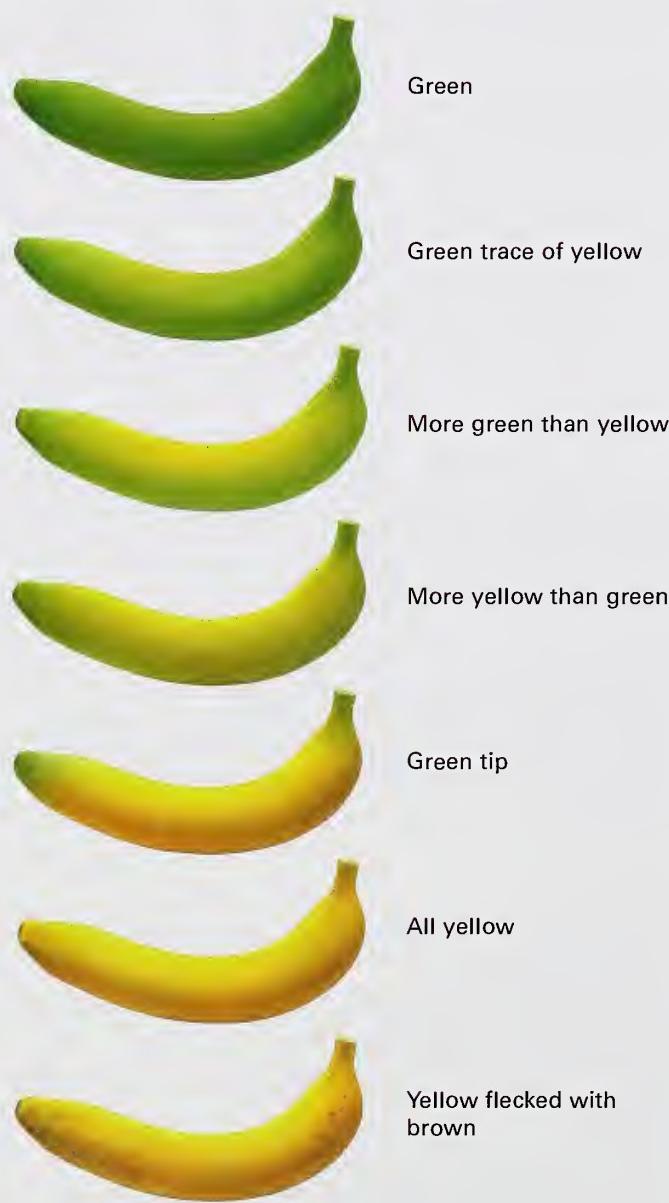
FRESH (CONTINUED)

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

BANANAS, FRESH: petite; green tips; 150 count.



Blackberries*

FRESH

Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

Note: Not all blackberries are graded. Ungraded berries are called "unclassified." Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance.

Popular Varieties

Cherokee (sweet)

Chester (mild/sweet)

Kotata (sweet)

Marion (tart)

Ollalie (sweet)

Texas Braze (sweet)

Waldo (sweet)

How Packed

Cartons of 12 6-oz. Clamshells

12 ½-pint containers

Pint containers

In Season

- Domestic Production
June through September
- Import Production
September through March

Purchasing Tips

- Color is the main characteristic to determine grade.
- Imports available off-season but prices may be higher.

Receiving

- Berries should be dry, clean, plump, bright and well colored.
- Avoid leaky, soft, or dull berries or those with caps still attached.

Blackberries*

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Storing

- Store in refrigerator.
- Do not rinse before storing.
- Allow for air circulation.
- Blackberries are very perishable; handle with care and use soon after receiving.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.4270 through 51.4277.

Sample Description

BLACKBERRIES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Grade 1 standard; domestic product to be provided when available; to be packed in $\frac{1}{2}$ pint containers; growing location to be provided with price quotes.

Blueberries*

FRESH

Size

Extra Large – less than 90 berries per cup
Large – 90-129 berries per cup
Medium – 130-189 berries per cup
Small – 190-250 berries per cup

Grades

U.S. No. 1



How Packed

12 6-oz. and 12 12-oz. dry pints
Clamshells
Cello bags
5- and 10-lb. cartons

In Season

- Domestic Production
May through November
- Import Production
November through May

Purchasing Tips

- Blueberries do not ripen after harvest.
- Look for deep purple or blue-black color with a silvery sheen.

Receiving

- Quality berries should be firm, plump, and dry.
- Color should be deep purple or blue-black with a silvery sheen or "bloom."

Storing

- Store in single layer at 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Be sure space is well ventilated.
- Very sensitive to rough handling and temperature fluctuations.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3475 through 51.3485

Sample Description

BLUEBERRIES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Grade No. 1, 12 6-oz. dry pints.

Cantaloupe



Sizes

By number in box:

- 9 count (largest)
- 12 count
- 15 count
- 18 count
- 23 count (smallest)

Grades

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Commercial

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Top Mark, PMR45, and hybrid types are most popular

How Packed

40-lb box, counts from 9 to 23

In Season

- Available year-round
- Peak season: June to September

Purchasing Tips

Because cantaloupe is firm when shipped, it usually needs a few days storage at room temperature.

Receiving

- Melon should be well formed; surface covered with raised netting; creamy yellow color; stem missing, leaving shallow depression.
- Reject bruised cantaloupe; melons that are green or soft or have deep cracks in rind.

Storing

- Check for ripeness. Ripe cantaloupe has typical odor, and stem end yields to gentle pressure. Store ripe cantaloupe in refrigerator and use as soon as possible – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Store unripe cantaloupe at room temperature 3 or 4 days until ripe.
- Cantaloupe produces ethylene gas. Store away from lettuce and other ethylene-sensitive fruits and vegetables.
- Store cut cantaloupe away from other foods to avoid odor transfer.

Preparation Tips

- Hold cut melon under refrigeration until served. Serve within 4 hours.
- Quality deteriorates when ripe cantaloupe has warmed to room temperature.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.475 to 51.479

Sample Description

CANTALOUPE, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 standard; 42 lb box; 23 count.

Cherries, Sweet

FRESH



Sizes

9, 9.5, 10, 10.5, 11, 11.5, and 12 row

Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Commercial

Note: Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance. Individual growing areas may also set their own grades.

Popular Varieties

Bing

Chelan

Lambert

Lapins

Rainier

Sweetheart

How Packed

11- to 20-lb. cartons or lugs

32-lb. crates

In Season

- Domestic Production
May through August
- Import Production
December

Purchasing Tips

- Purchase cherries with green stems intact.
- Look for smooth plump skins.
- Avoid cherries with dull color or shriveling, dark stems.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality – plump smooth skins, bright red color
- Reject cherries with blemishes, rotted or mushy skins.
- Reject either hard or light-colored cherries.

Storing

- Store in refrigerator at 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Keep separated from foods with strong odors.
- Cherries bruise easily; handle with care.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2646 through 51.2660

Sample Description

CHERRIES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Grade 1 standard; 11-lb. carton.

Citrus Salad Mix

FRESH CUT



How Packed

1-gal containers, 4 per case

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Some packers call their product "salad mix with citrus."
- Mix usually includes grapefruit sections, orange sections, pineapple, and grapes.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject product that is discolored.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep containers sealed until ready to use.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

CITRUS SALAD MIX, FRESH CUT: mix of fresh fruit to be grapefruit and orange sections, pineapple and grapes; code dated; 4/1 gal.

Dates*



Grades

U.S. Grade A

U.S. Grade B

U.S. Grade C

Popular Varieties

- Deglet Noor – semi-dry, amber colored
Halawy – soft with sweet flavor
Khadrawy – soft, dark brown colored
Zahidi – semi-dry, golden colored

How Packed

- 7-oz. plastic cups holding whole dates
8-oz. plastic cups holding pitted dates
15-lb. boxes

In Season

- Domestic Production
August through December
- Import Production
January through December

Purchasing Tips

- Halawy and khadrawy varieties exhibit a soft texture.
- Deglet noor and zahidi varieties are semi-dry and firm
- Avoid dates that show crystallization of sugars or physical defects.

Dates

(CONTINUED)

Receiving

- Good quality dates should be well colored and moist.
- Reject dates with discoloration or molding.
- Reject dates with a crystal-like sugar film.

Storing

- Store in refrigerator
- Store at 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% humidity
- Maintain high humidity to prevent shriveling.
- Maintain low temperature to maintain flavor, aroma and general quality.

Standard of Identity

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.1001 through 52.1011

Sample Description

DATES: pitted, to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard, domestic product provided when available, 8-oz. plastic cups.

Dried Fruit

Grades

- U.S. Grade A
- U.S. Grade B
- U.S. Grade C

Popular Varieties

- Dried Apricots
- Dried Figs
- Dried Peaches
- Dried Pears
- Dried Plums
- Raisins

How packed

- Consumer cartons
- Film bags
- Plastic cups
- Bulk

In Season

Available year-round.

Purchasing Tips

- Specify desired product.
- May be stored in proper conditions for longer than fresh product.

Receiving

- Good quality dried fruit should be well colored.
- Avoid dried fruit that is darkened, moldy or insect damaged.

Storing

- Short-term storage should be at 45-50°F/7-10°C and 85-95% humidity.
- For storage beyond 7 days, reduce humidity to 65-70%

Standard of Identity

None

Dried Fruit*

(CONTINUED)

Grade Standard Reference

Dried Apricots – Title 7 CFR 52.5761 through 52.5773
Dried Figs – Title 7 CFR 52.1021 through 52.1030
Dried Peaches – Title 7 CFR 52.5801 through 52.5810
Dried Pears – Title 7 CFR 52.5841 through 52.5849
Dried Plums – Title 7 CFR 52.3181 through 52.3188
Raisins – Title 7 CFR 52.1841 through 52.1858

Sample Description

Raisins: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard, 2 lb. film bag

Fruit Salad Mix

FRESH CUT



How Packed

1-gal packages, 4 per case

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

Mix should be specified; the usual mix includes cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple, and grapes.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject product that is discolored.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep containers sealed until ready to use.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

FRUIT SALAD MIX, FRESH CUT: mix of fresh fruit to be cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple and grapes; code dated; 4/1 gal.

Fruits for Salad

CANNED

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Specify packing medium: Extra heavy syrup, heavy syrup, light syrup, fruit juice, water.
- Minimum drained weight 64.5 oz per can.
- Grade B most popular and lower in cost.
- Product should contain six fruits in following proportions:
 - Apricots, peeled or unpeeled, quarters or halves – 15% to 30%
 - Peaches, quarters or slices, peeled – 23% to 46%
 - Pears, quarters or slices, peeled – 19% to 38%
 - Pineapple, wedge-shaped, segments from slices – 8% to 16%
 - Cherries, red, artificially colored, whole – 3% to 8%
 - Grapes, natural seedless, whole – 6% to 12%

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.3832

Sample Description

FRUITS FOR SALAD, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; fruit juice packing medium; 6/10.

Fruit Cocktail

CANNED

Grades

U.S. Grade A or
U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or
U.S. Choice
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)



How packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing tips

- Specify packing medium: Extra heavy, heavy, light, fruit juice and water, fruit juice, or artificially sweetened.
- Should contain fruits in not less nor more than the following percentages:
 - 30% to 50% diced peaches, any yellow variety
 - 25% to 45% diced pears, any variety
 - 6% to 16% diced pineapple, any variety
 - 6% to 20% whole grapes, any seedless variety
 - 2% to 6% cherry halves, any light sweet or artificial red variety
- Minimum drained weight is 71.15 oz per #10 can.
- Grade B is highest grade packed by many processors.
- Less expensive alternative is fruit mix that contains only peaches, pears, and grapes (no pineapple or cherries).

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 145.135 to 145.136

Grade Standard Reference:

Title 7 CFR 52.1052

Sample Description

FRUIT COCKTAIL, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; light syrup; 6/10.

Grapefruit

Sizes

By number in container:

27 count (largest)

32 count

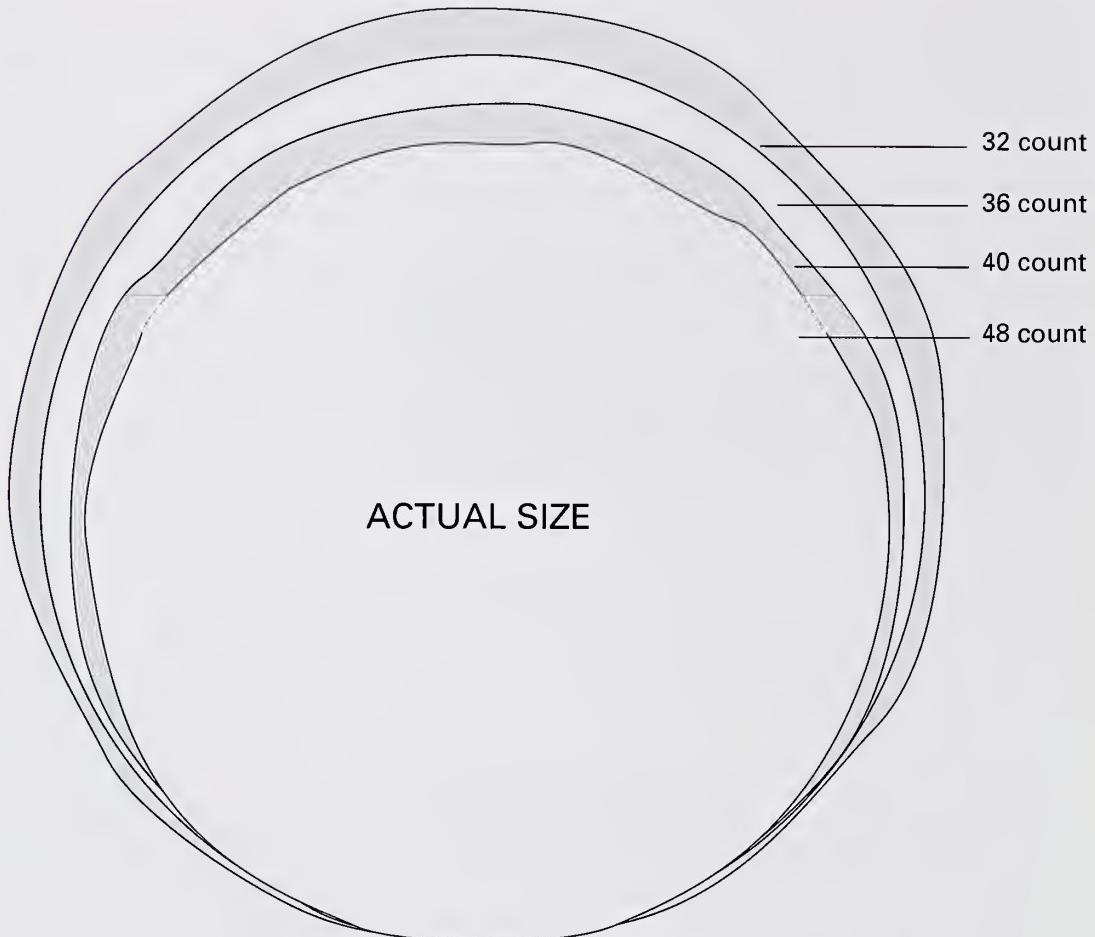
36 count

40 count

48 count

56 count

64 count (smallest)



Grades

Arizona and California

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 3

Unclassified (ungraded)

Florida

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Bright

U.S. No. 1 Golden

U.S. No. 1 Bronze

U.S. No. 1 Russet

U.S. No. 2

U.S. No. 2 Bright

U.S. No. 2 Russet

U.S. No. 3

Unclassified (ungraded)

All Other States

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Bright

U.S. No. 1 Bronze

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2

U.S. No. 2 Russet

U.S. No. 3

Unclassified (ungraded)

How Packed

Arizona and California: 34-lb to 35-lb carton

Florida: 4/5 bushel cartons

Texas: 20 and 40-lb carton

Availability

- Arizona/California: year round
- Peak Florida: September to June
- Texas: October to May

Purchasing Tips

- Grapefruit is picked ripe; ready to eat when received.
- Russetting (see grades) refers to brown spots caused by mites sucking the skin. Only the skin is affected; flesh is same quality as grapefruit of the same grade.
- Ripe grapefruit may develop green color in warm temperature. Interior quality is not affected.
- Most popular sizes are medium, from 32 to 48.

Popular Varieties

Red or pink flesh: Ruby

White flesh: Marsh (seedless) and Duncan

Grapefruit

FRESH (CONTINUED)



Receiving

- Inspect for quality: Heavy for size; firm, well-shaped; thin skin.
- Reject fruit soft to touch, with mold or rot, or light in weight.

Storing

- Store at room temperature for use within a few days.
- To keep for 4 to 6 weeks, store at above refrigerated temperature and below room temperature – 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.620 to 51.627; 51.750 to 51.759 and 51.925 to 51.930

Sample Description

GRAPEFRUIT, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; size 40; Ruby red; 34 to 40 lb carton

Grapes

FRESH



Grades

- U.S. Extra Fancy Table
- U.S. Fancy Table
- U.S. No. 1 Table
- U.S. No. 1 Institutional

Popular Varieties

Blue-Blacks: Beauty (seedless varieties are Autumn Royal, Fantasy and Marroo)

Greens: Seedless varieties are Perlette, Thompson, and Superior

Reds: Seedless varieties are Flame and Ruby

How Packed

Bulk: 10-, 18-, 23-, and 28-lb lugs or cartons

Pre-portioned: 4-oz bags, 12 per box; and 16-oz bags, 15 per box

In Season

• Domestic Production

(grown mostly in California):

Greens: May through December

Reds: June through December

Blacks: June through January

• Import Production

(grown mostly in Chile):

Greens: December through April

Reds: December through May

Blacks: December through April

Grapes

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Purchasing Tips

- Color is the main characteristic to determine grade.
- Domestic grapes are packed in 23-lb lugs; Chilean imported grapes in 18-lb lugs.

Receiving

- Color:
 - Blue or black should be rich, dark color.
 - Greens should be green with yellow tint.
 - Reds should be primarily red.
- Grapes should be plump, not wrinkled.
- Grapes should be firmly attached to green, flexible stem. When grapes fall off stem, they are overripe.
- Discolored grapes indicate exposure to sunlight.

Storing

- Store in refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Stack boxes gently and allow for air circulation.
- Store away from strong-smelling, ethylene-producing items such as broccoli, cabbage, and onions.
- Do not store in front of fan or other strong air current.
- Do not rinse before storing.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.880 to 51.885

Sample Description

GRAPES, FRESH: green variety; to meet Grade standard for U.S. No. 1; 23 lb lugs when in season, other times of year 18 lb pack.

Honeydew

FRESH

Sizes

- By number in 30-lb carton:
- 4 count (largest)
 - 5 count
 - 6 count
 - 8 count
 - 9 count
 - 10 count
 - 12 count (smallest)

Grades

- U.S. No. 1
- U.S. Commercial
- U.S. No. 2
- Unclassified (ungraded)

How Packed

30-lb carton for 4 to 12 count

In Season

Peak season: May to December

Purchasing Tips

- Best melons are 4 and 5 count size.
- U.S. No. 1 Grade recommended.
- Imports available off season, but quality is uncertain and price higher.

Receiving

- Melon should be heavy and well shaped.
- Handle carefully; honeydew bruises easily.

Storing

- Check for ripeness. Ripe honeydew rind is creamy color; blossom end is soft; has ripe odor. Store ripe honeydew in refrigerator and use as soon as possible – 45-50°F/7-10°C.
- Store firm (unripe) honeydew at room temperature, then use immediately or refrigerate.
- Honeydew produces ethylene gas. Store away from lettuce and other ethylene-sensitive fruits and vegetables.

Honeydew

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3740 to 51.3743

Sample Description

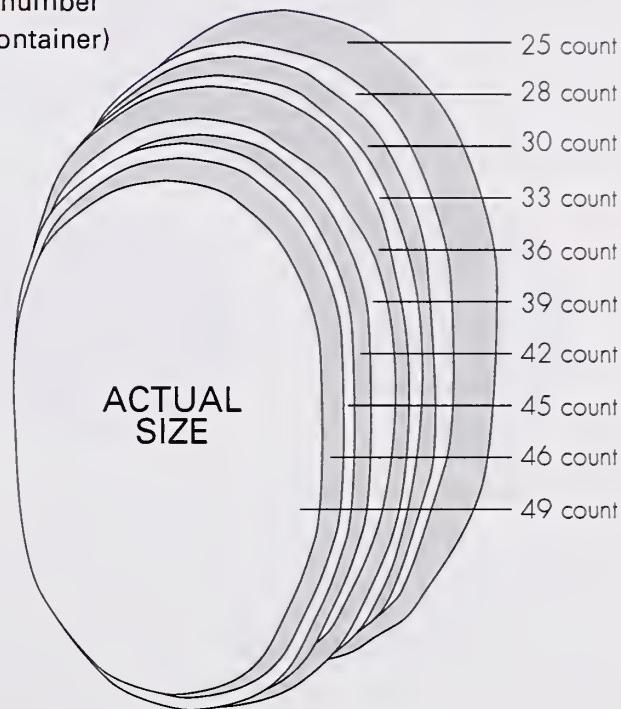
HONEYDEW, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 standard; 30 lb box; size 4 or 5.

Kiwifruit

FRESH

Sizes

(By number
in container)



Grades

U.S. Fancy
U.S. No. 1
U.S. No. 2

Popular Varieties

Hayward

How Packed

7 1/2-lb single-layer flats (California)
8-lb single-layer flats (New Zealand)
22- to 25-lb loose-fill cartons

In Season

- Available year-round
- California peak season: November through April
- New Zealand peak season: August and September
- Chile peak season: April through June

Kiwifruit

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Purchasing Tips

- Export grade is the top grade from country where grown.
- Layer flats should be ordered by count; loose-fill ordered by lb.
- 30 to 42 count are the usual sizes.

Receiving

- Fruit should be plump, unwrinkled, and show no signs of damage.
- Ripe fruit gives to gentle pressure; unripe fruit is firm to touch.

Storing

- Ripe fruit: Store in coldest part of refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Unripe fruit: Store at room temperature 3 to 5 days before serving.
- Do not store near ethylene-producing fruits: Bananas, tomatoes, apples, melons, and pears.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2335

Sample Description

KIWIFRUIT: 33 count; to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; domestic product to be provided when available; to be packed in single-layer flats; growing location to be provided with price quotes.



Lemons*

FRESH

Sizes

75-, 95-, 115-, 140-, 165-, 200-, and 235-count

Grades

U.S. No. 1
U.S. Export No. 1
U.S. Combination
U.S. No. 2



How Packed

40-lb cartons
10-lb. mini-pack cartons
8-lb. consumer cartons
2-, 3-, and 5-lb. bags

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Purchase thinner-skinned fruit.
- Look for smooth, firm skins and bright color.

Receiving

- Lemons should be firm, heavy for size and have thin smooth skins.
- Check ripe fruit for pleasant citrus fragrance.
- Reject lemons with bruised, discolored, pitted or wrinkled skins.

Storing

- Store in cooler at 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity
- Maintain adequate air ventilation.
- Keep cartons off the floor.
- Store away from foods with strong odors and ethylene-producing fruits.

Standard of Identity

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2795 through 51.2821

Sample Description

LEMONS, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard, 165-count.

Mangoes*

FRESH

Sizes

6-, 10-, 12-, 14-, 16, 18-, and 20-count

Grades

No U.S. grades given.

Popular Varieties

Tommy Atkins – red or yellow when ripe

Keitt – stays green when ripe, may have slight yellow blush

Ataulfo – remains yellow when ripe

Hayden – yellow with an orange or red blush when ripe

Kent – turns yellow or remains green with few hints of color when ripe

How Packed

Single-layer tray packs

40-lb. cartons

In Season

- Domestic Production
May through September
- Import Production
Year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Ripe fruit yields to gentle pressure and emits a fruity aroma.
- Depending on variety, skin turns from green to yellow-green or yellow with red blush as it ripens.

Receiving

- Unripe mangoes should be fairly firm with green skin.
- Fruit should be well shaped and free of bruises or blemishes.
- Avoid shriveled or discolored fruit or those with soft spots.



Storing

- Ripen fruit at room temperature or in cooler at 50-70°F/13-21°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Keep away from ethylene producing fruit.
- Refrigerate ripe mangoes at 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity

Standard of Identity

None

Grade Standard Reference

No grade standard exists

Sample Description

MANGOES, FRESH: partially ripened, blemish free, 12 count.

Melons

FRESH

Sizes

By number in carton:

4 count (largest)

5 count

6 count

7 count

8 count

9 count

10 count

12 count (smallest)

Grades

Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Casaba: Round, yellow rind, white flesh, sweet, juicy

Crenshaw: Pointed at stem end, golden greenish rind, golden pink flesh, mild, sweet

Juan Canary: Oblong, yellow rind, white flesh, sweet

Persian: Round, rind like cantaloupe, pink-orange flesh, delicate flavor

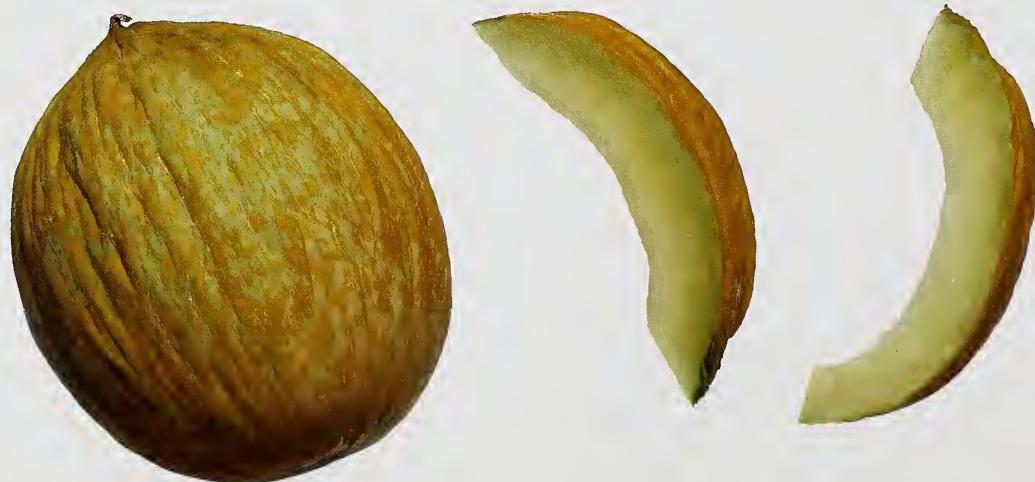
Santa Claus: Oblong, about 6 lb, green-gold rind with some netting, light green flesh, honeydew flavor

How Packed

30-lb carton

In Season

- July to October, domestic
- November to March, imports



Purchasing Tips

- Sizes 4 and 5 count are most popular.
- Medium size is 7- to 8-inch diameter.

Receiving

- Melon should be heavy for size, well shaped, rind color typical of variety; ripe melon fragrant and slightly soft at stem end.
- Reject melons that are bruised, light for size, or have off color.

Storing

- Check for ripeness. Store firm, unripe melons at room temperature until ripe, then use immediately or refrigerate.
- Store cut melon away from other foods to avoid odor transfer.
- Ripe melon that has warmed to room temperature should be discarded.

Preparation Tips

Hold cut melon in refrigerator until served.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

MELON, SANTA CLAUS, FRESH: 30 lb; 5 count.

Nectarines

FRESH



Sizes

By number in container:

48 count (largest)

56 count

64 count

72 count

80 count

88 count

96 count (smallest)

Grades

U.S. Fancy

U.S. Extra No. 1

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Clingstone: Flame Kist, Fairlane, Red Jim

Freestone: May Grand, Fantasia, Summer Grand

How Packed

25-lb loose-fill cartons

22-lb 2-layer tray pack

18-lb 2-layer tray pack (Chile)

Single layer tray packs

In Season

May to October

Purchasing tips

- Nectarines are smooth-skinned peaches.
- Closed container must show numerical count or minimum diameter.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Nectarines should be plump, smooth, unblemished; have rich color, slight softening along seam.
- Reject fruit with shriveled skin, bruises, or rotting spots.

Storing

- Check for ripeness. Ripe nectarines give to gentle pressure and are fragrant. Refrigerate ripe fruit in coldest part of refrigerator. Do not refrigerate unripe fruit.
- To ripen, store at room temperature – 55-70°F/13-21°C.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3145 to 51.3149

Sample Description

NECTARINES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Extra No. 1 Grade standard; freestone; 56 count; 25 lb carton.



Oranges

Federal Sizing

Large: Diameter 3 1/2 inch or more, weight

326 gm or greater

Medium: Diameter 3 1/4 to 2 3/4 inch, weight

315 to 325 gm

Small: Diameter 2 1/2 inch or less, weight

150 to 314 gm

Grades

Arizona and California

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Florida

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1 Bright

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Golden

U.S. No. 1 Bronze

U.S. No. 1 Russet

U.S. No. 2 Bright

U.S. No. 2

U.S. No. 2 Russet

U.S. No. 3

Unclassified (ungraded)

All Other States

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Bright

U.S. No. 1 Bronze

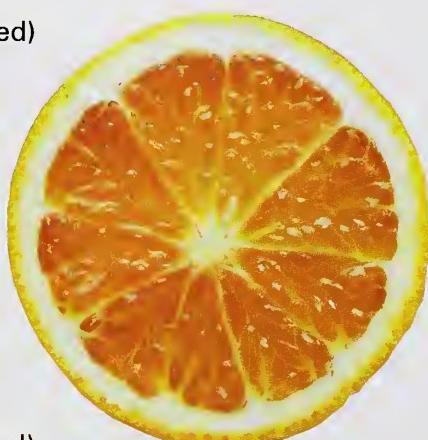
U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2

U.S. No. 2 Russet

U.S. No. 3

Unclassified (ungraded)



Popular Varieties

Cara Cara (Red Navel)

Hamlin

Navel

Temple

Valencia



How Packed

4/5 bushel carton (Florida and Texas)

20 and 40-lb carton (Arizona and California)

40-lb carton (standard)

In Season

Peak season: December to May

Available year round

Purchasing Tips

- Valencia is a good juice orange but not as easy to peel for eating as other varieties.
- Navel and Temple are good eating oranges.
- California and Arizona fruit has thick skin; Florida and Texas fruit is thinner skinned.
- Florida and Texas fruit often has browning or russetting caused by mites; doesn't affect flesh or flavor. Sold as less expensive "russet" grade.
- Florida and Texas ripe fruit is subject to "greening" when warm weather causes chlorophyll to return to peel. Flavor and quality are not affected. Fruit with orange color added to cover the greening must be labeled "color added."
- USDA sets and enforces standards of sugar and acid content in fruit. Oranges ripen on the tree and are picked ripe.
- Extra large fruit may lack flavor and sweetness and contain more acid.
- Popular sizes for eastern oranges are 64, 80, 100, and 125; western 72, 88, 113, and 138.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality: Heavy for size, firm, good color, fine texture.
- Reject fruit with soft spots or mold.

Oranges

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Storing

Store in warmest part of refrigerator –
45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity.

Preparation Tips

Steam oranges 2 to 4 minutes for easier peeling.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.681 to 51.688; 51.1140 to 51.1151,
and 51.1085 to 51.1089

Sizes

Arizona and California

By number in 7/10 bushel:

48 count (largest)

56 count

72 count

88 count

113 count

138 count

163 count (smallest)

Sample Description

ORANGES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1
Grade standard; navel; size 125 or 113; 38 to 45 lbs.

Florida and Texas

By number in 7/10 bushel:

56 count (largest)

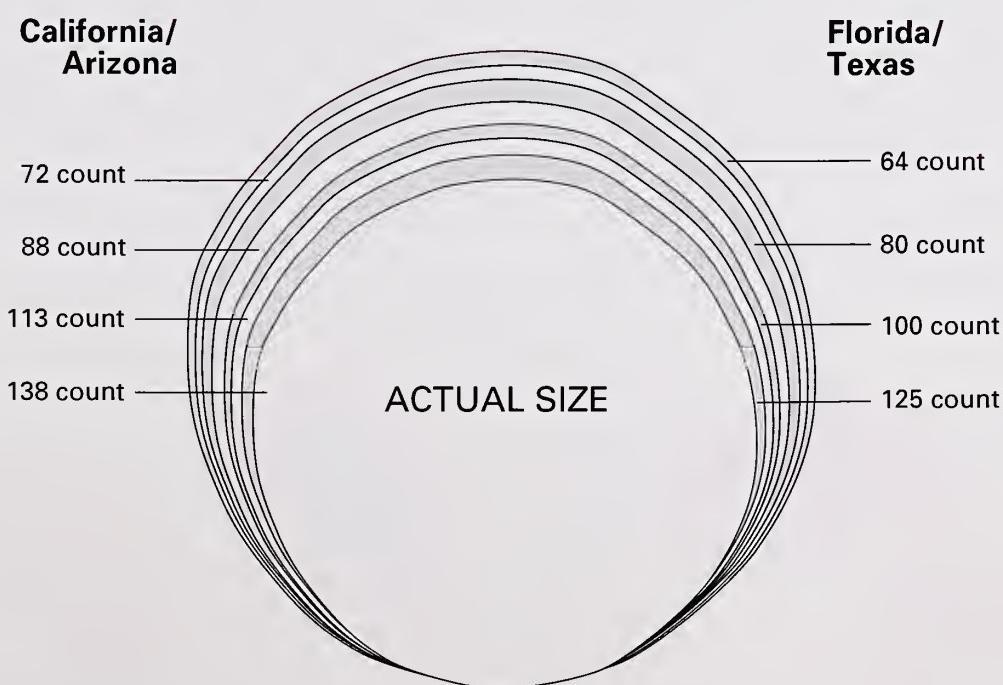
64 count

80 count

100 count

125 count

144 count (smallest)



Oranges, Mandarin

CANNED

Forms

- Whole (intact segments)
- Broken (segments half original size or larger)
- Pieces (small portions of segments)

Sizes

- (Whole segments only)
- Large:** 20 or fewer segments per $3\frac{1}{3}$ oz
- Medium:** 21 to 35 segments per $3\frac{1}{3}$ oz
- Small:** 36 or more segments per $3\frac{1}{3}$ oz
- Mixed:** 2 or more sizes per can



Grades

There is no U.S. Grade standard.

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Large volume purchasers may use USDA's authorized Commercial Item Description (CID) A-A-20119.

Summary:

Product prepared from variety *Citrus reticulata blanco*.

Color of product to be rich yellow or orange.

Packing medium shall be suitable and reasonably clear.

Drained weight 55% of can capacity for whole segments, 58% for broken segments or pieces.

Forms and sizes as shown above.

- Specify product form, size, and packing medium (water, citrus juice, mixed citrus juice, water and citrus juice, syrup).

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

ORANGES, MANDARIN, CANNED: to be packed to standard of Commercial Item Description A-A-20119; whole and broken fruit segments; medium size; citrus juice medium; 6/10.



Papayas*

FRESH

Sizes

6-, 8-, 10-, and 12-count

Grades

No U.S. grades given.

Popular Varieties

Kapoho

Sunrise

Waimanalo

How Packed

10-lb. cartons

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Papayas are shipped while still green to prevent damage from rough handling.
- Papaya is ripe and ready to eat when it yields to gentle palm pressure.

Receiving

- Fruit should be firm with unblemished skins, regardless of degree of ripeness.
- Reject papayas with large dark spots on peel.
- Reject those that are soft, moldy, or leaking at the stem end.

Storing

- Store at 60-65°F/16-18°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Handle with care to avoid damage.
- Do not store papayas below 45°F/7°C.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

No grade standard exists.

Sample Description

PAPAYAS, FRESH: partially ripened, blemish free, 6-count



Peaches

FRESH

Grades

U.S. Fancy

U.S. Extra No. 1

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified
(ungraded)



Popular Varieties

Clingstone

Freestone

How Packed

- 25 and 30-lb volume-fill boxes ($\frac{3}{4}$ bushel)
- Double-layer tray pack, about 22 lbs
- 25-lb loose-fill lugs ($\frac{1}{2}$ bushel)
- Single-layer tray pack

In Season

Peak season: May to September

Purchasing Tips

- Closed container must show numerical count or minimum diameter. Order Western peaches by count, Eastern by diameter.
- Industry considers "standard pack" $\frac{3}{4}$ -bushel or $\frac{1}{2}$ -bushel baskets.
- Most fresh peaches are freestone variety.
- Bid unit should be per lb.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality: Should be firm or firm ripe, creamy or yellowish color.
- Reject green, bruised, discolored or soft peaches.

Storing

- Check for ripeness. If firm, hold at room temperature until ripe, serve immediately or refrigerate and use as soon as possible. Store no longer than 1 week.
- Do not wash until ready to serve.



Standard of Identity Reference

None

Peaches

U.S. Grade Standard

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1210 to 51.1214

Sample Description

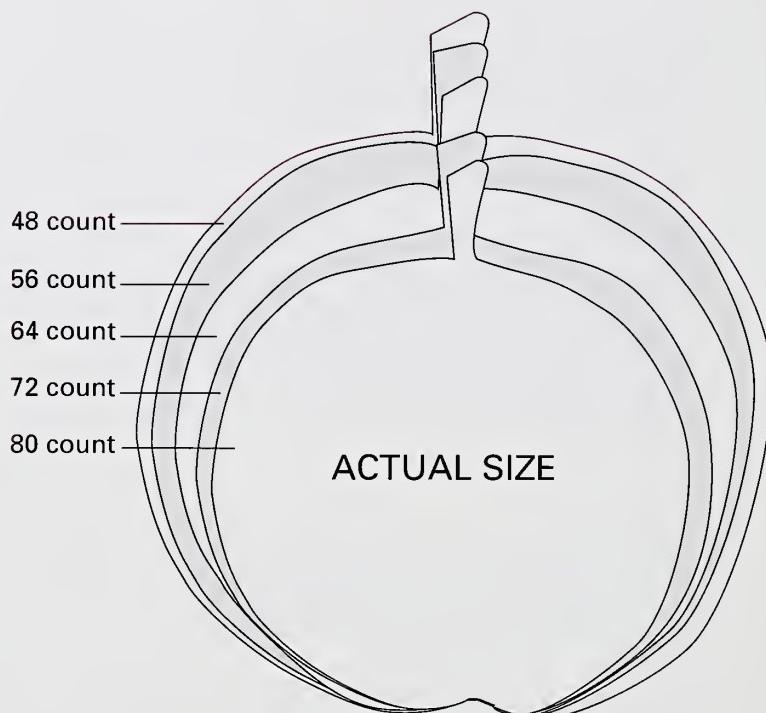
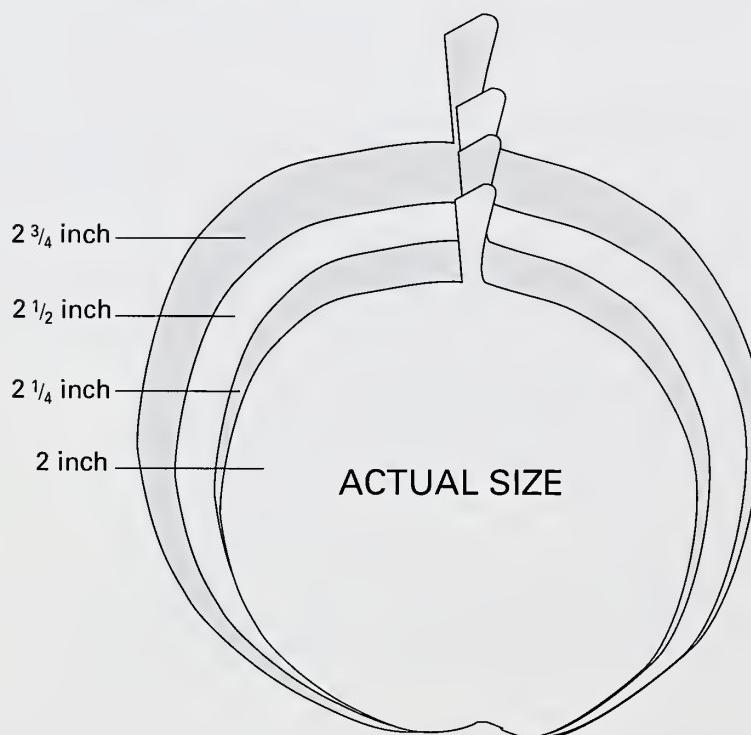
PEACHES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Extra No. 1 Grade standard; freestone; loose-fill box or lug; $2\frac{3}{4}$ inch or 64 count.



Sizes

Eastern pack – by diameter

Western pack – by number in container



Peaches

CANNED



Forms

- Halves
- Slices
- Quarters
- Diced
- Mixed (peeled, pitted pieces predominantly irregular in size and shape)

Grades

- U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
- U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice
- U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
- U.S. Grade D (Clingstone only)
- Substandard

Popular Varieties

- Clingstone:** Peaches with pits that cling to the flesh. These account for about 80% of canned peaches.
- Freestone:** Peaches with pits that easily separate from the flesh.

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Specify packing medium: Extra heavy syrup, heavy syrup, light syrup, extra light syrup, water, fruit juice and water, and artificially sweetened.
- Sugar, a preservative, protects flavor, color, and texture of fruits packed in syrup.

- Drained weight (from 60 oz to 68.6 oz per can) specified in federal regulations; no need to include in product description.
- Mixed peaches are sometimes called "salad cuts" or "pieces."
- U.S. Grade B is the highest grade generally available.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 145.170 to 145.171

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.2563 and 52.2610

Sample Description

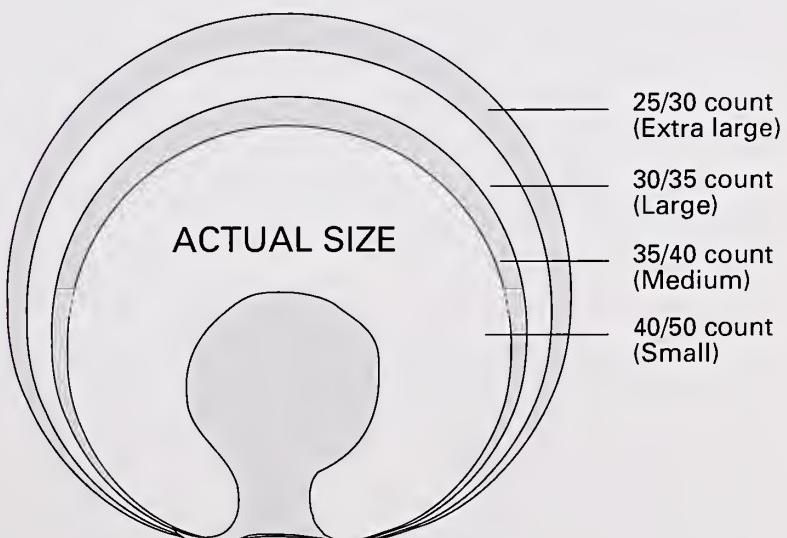
PEACHES, CANNED: halves; to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; 45 to 50 count; clingstone; extra light syrup; 6/10.

Sample Description

PEACHES, CANNED: slices; to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; clingstone; extra light syrup; 6/10.

Sizes

By number of halves per #10 can:



Pears

FRESH



Sizes

By number in container:

70 count (largest)

80 count

90 count

100 count

110 count

135 count

150 count (smallest)

Grades

Standards for Summer and Fall Pears

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Standards for Winter Pears

U.S. Extra No. 1

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Summer and Fall: Bartlett

Winter: Anjou, Bosc, Comice

How Packed

36-lb bulk loose-fill cartons

46-lb layer packed with individually wrapped pears

22- to 28-lb two-layer cartons

In Season

- Winter pears: October to June
- Summer and fall pears: July to December

Purchasing Tips

- Medium sizes are 110 and 135 counts; 2 or 3 pears = 1 lb.
- Pears are picked mature but not ripe and require 2 to 3 days to ripen after received.
- Winter pears will keep longer than summer pears.

Receiving

- Pears should be firm, clean, bright, with color typical of variety when ripe (Bartlett - yellow; Anjou, Bosc, and Comice - greenish yellow). Reject fruit shriveled near stem, with scars, hard spots, or insect damage.
- Keiffer varieties are gritty and very large; don't accept as a substitution.

Storing

- Check for ripeness. Ripe pears give to gentle pressure and have color and odor typical of variety; store in coldest section of refrigerator. Store firm (unripe) fruit at room temperature, then use immediately or refrigerate.
- Pears give off and absorb odors; don't store near cabbage, carrots, celery, potatoes, or onions.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1261 to 51.1264 and 51.1300 to 51.1305

Sample Description

PEARS, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; any summer or winter variety except Keiffer; 110 count; 46 lb layer pack only.

Pears

CANNED

Forms

Halves
Slices
Quarters
Diced
Pieces

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard

Popular Varieties

Bartlett
Kieffer

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Specify packing medium: Extra heavy syrup, heavy syrup, light syrup, extra light syrup, water, fruit juice and water, fruit juice, and artificially sweetened.
- Minimum drained weight for diced pears is 67 oz; 65.5 oz for other forms.
- Grade B is highest grade packed by many processors.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 145.175 to 145.176

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.1613

Sample Description

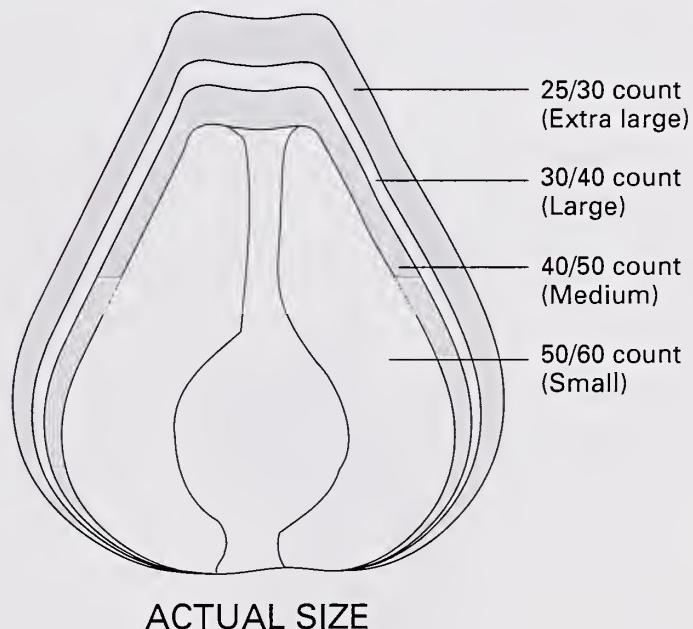
PEARS, CANNED: halves; to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; 50 to 60 count; light syrup; 6/10.

Sample Description

PEARS, CANNED: diced; to be packed to U.S. Grade C standard; light syrup; 6/10.

Sizes

By number of halves per #10 can



Pineapples*

FRESH

Sizes

6-, 8-, 10-, 12-, and 14-count per 40-lb. carton

Note: Counts 8 to 14 are most predominant for retail; counts 12 and 14 are typically ordered for foodservice.

Grades

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

Note: Not all pineapples are graded. Ungraded pineapples are called "unclassified." Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance.

How Packed

20-lb. single-layer cartons

40-lb. 2-layer cartons

In Season

Available year-round



Purchasing Tips

- Color of shell does not indicate ripeness or sugar content. Shell color is determined by the amount of sun exposure during growing.
- Pineapples do not ripen after harvesting.
- Ripe pineapple should have a distinctive aroma.

Receiving

- Pineapples should be heavy for their size, well shaped, and fresh looking with dark green crown leaves.
- Shells should be dry and crisp and range in color from greenish-brown to golden brown.
- Carefully inspect containers immediately after receiving.
- Reject wet boxes since this may indicate overripe or damaged fruit.

Storing

- Store for 7 days or less at 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity
- Although pineapples have a tough-looking exterior, they can bruise easily.
- Do not store pineapples below 45°F/7°C.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1485 through 51.1510

Sample Description

PINEAPPLES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 grade standard, 12-count.

Pineapple

CANNED

Forms

Slices
Half slices
Broken slices
Spears
Tidbits
Chunks
Cubes
Crushed

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Choice
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard

Popular Varieties

Product usually sold by area of origin rather than variety: Hawaii, Philippines, Thailand, Mexico, and South Africa.

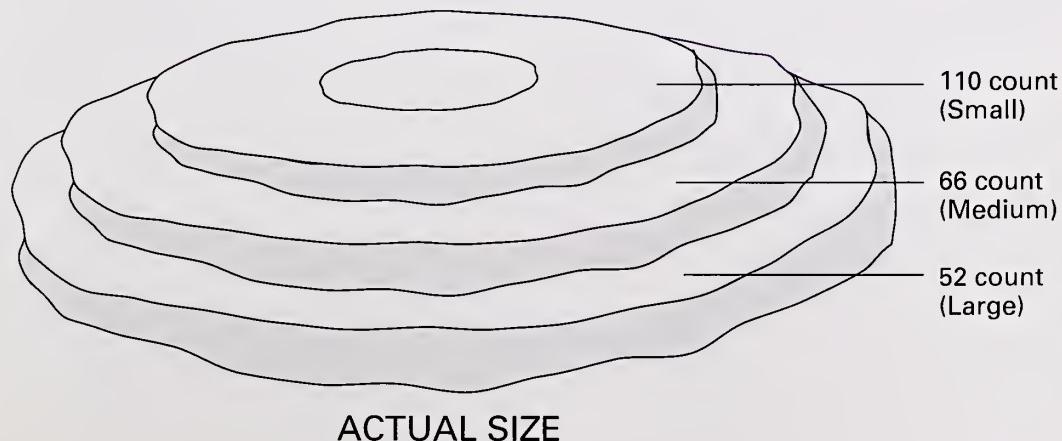
How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Sizes

For Slices

By number of slices per #10 can:



Purchasing Tips

- Specify packing medium: Extra heavy syrup, heavy syrup, light syrup, extra light syrup, water, pineapple juice, pineapple juice and water, clarified pineapple juice, or artificially sweetened.
- Slices are circles cut at right angles to core with core removed. Slices per can varies from 52 to 110, depending on size.
- Minimum drained weight varies with form and packing medium from 59.5 oz to 67.4 oz per can.
- Pineapple grown in Mexico and South Africa is lower quality than fruit grown in Hawaii, Philippines, and Thailand.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 145.180 and 145.181

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.1719

Sample Description

PINEAPPLE, CANNED: medium slices; to be packed to U.S. Grade C standard; light syrup; product of Hawaii, Philippines, or Thailand only; 6/10.

Sample Description

PINEAPPLE, CANNED: crushed, to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; solid pack in juice; product of Hawaii, Philippines, or Thailand only; 6/10.

Plums

Grades

U.S. Fancy
U.S. No. 1
U.S. Combination
U.S. No. 2
Unclassified
(ungraded)



Popular Varieties

Black Beaut: Black skin, reddish yellow flesh
Casselman: Red skin, deep yellow flesh
El Dorado: Reddish black skin, amber flesh
Friar: Deep black skin, amber flesh
Kelsey: Green skin, yellowish green flesh
Lorado: Red skin, yellow flesh
Red Beaut: Red skin, yellow flesh
Roysum: Reddish blue skin, light yellow flesh
Santa Rosa: Purple skin, yellow flesh

How Packed

28-lb, $\frac{1}{2}$ -bushel volume-fill containers
18-lb, 2-layer tray pack (Chile)

In Season

Peak season: May to October

Purchasing Tips

- Plums come in round to oblong shapes, sweet to acid taste.
- Blue and purple plums are milder with sweeter flavor; other plums are medium to large size, various shapes and very juicy.
- All varieties have short but different growing seasons.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality: Fresh, plump, good color, fairly firm.
- Reject hard, immature, shriveled fruit; fruit with soft spots, skin breaks, or brown discoloration.

Storing

- Ripen plums at room temperature – 55-70°F/13-21°C.
- Refrigerate plums after they get soft. Store in single layers.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

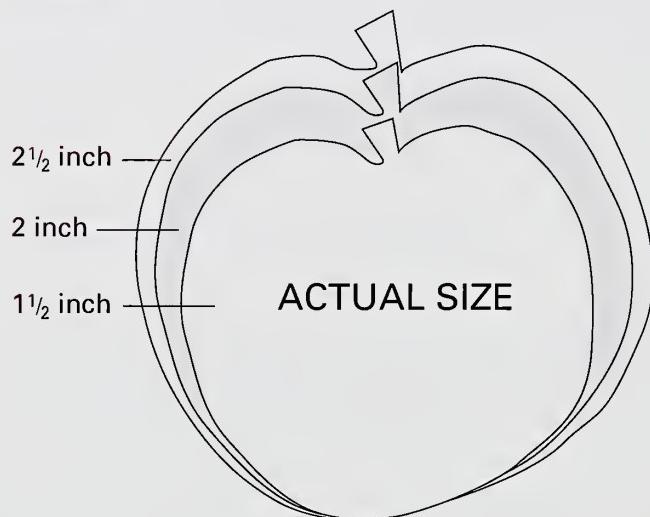
Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1520 to 51.1524

Sample Description

PLUMS, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; blue or purple; size 8 to 9 count; 28 lb loose pack carton when domestic available, other times 18 lb tray pack import.

Sizes



Diameter	Count per lb	Size
1 1/2 inch	8 to 9	Small
2 inch	5 to 6	Medium
2 1/2 inch	3 to 4	Large

Raspberries*

FRESH



Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No.2

Note: Not all raspberries are graded. Ungraded berries are called "unclassified." Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance.

Popular Varieties

Meeker

Willamette

Amity

Heritage

Sweet Briar

How Packed

5-lb. boxes holding 12 6-oz. or 9 8-oz. containers

6-lb. boxes holding 12 8-oz. containers

9-lb. boxes holding 24 6-oz. containers

In Season

- Domestic Production

May through November

- Import Production

December through May

Purchasing Tips

- Raspberries are highly perishable and should be used within 1-2 days after arrival.
- Raspberries may decay if allowed to stand at room temperature.
- Due to varietal differences the appearance of red raspberries can vary from dull and dark to bright and shiny.

Receiving

- Raspberries should be dry, plump, and firm.
- Reject moldy, soft, or leaky berries, or berries that break apart easily and don't hold their shape.
- Reject leaking or deteriorating berries.

Storing

- Handle berries with care to prevent damage.
- Raspberries are sensitive to even light freezing; do not store below 30°F/-1°C.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.4320 through 51.4328

Sample Description

RASPBERRIES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 grade standard, domestic product to be provided when available, 5-lb. box, growing location to be provided with price quotes.

Strawberries

FRESH

Grades

U.S. No. 1 (not less than $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch diameter)
U.S. Combination (minimum 65% No. 1)
U.S. No. 2 (not less than $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch diameter)
Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Camaroso
Chandler
Driscoll's
Seascape
Selva

How Packed

12-lb flats of 12 pints
12-lb flats of 6 quarts
6-lb bulk half trays
9-lb flats holding 8 16-oz clamshells or 16 8-oz clamshells

In Season

Peak season: May to July
Available: year round

Purchasing Tips

Purchase for use within 2 days.

Receiving

Look for fresh, clean, bright and solid red color with very little green or white; green caps fresh looking; no mold; no leaky or damaged berries.

Storing

- Refrigerate immediately in coldest part of refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Do not wash or remove caps until ready to serve.
- Typical shelf life 5 to 7 days.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3115 to 51.3118

Sample Description

STRAWBERRIES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; 12/pts.



Tangerines

FRESH

Sizes

California/Arizona pack

Medium

Large

Jumbo

Mammoth

Colossal

Super Colossal



Florida pack – by number in container:

64 count (largest)

80 count

100 count

120 count

150 count

176 count (smallest)

In Season

July to April

Grades

Florida

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Bronze

U.S. No. 1 Russet

U.S. No. 2

U.S. No. 2 Russet

U.S. No. 3

Unclassified (ungraded)

Other States

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Bronze

U.S. No. 2

U.S. No. 2 Russet

U.S. No. 3

Popular varieties

Dancy

Fairchild

Honey Murcott

Sunburst

How Packed

Eastern pack: Loose pack in 43-lb 4/5 bushel carton or 30-lb half carton, 3, 4 and 5 lb. bags

Western pack: 28 and 40 lb. cartons, 5 and 8 lb. specialty cartons, 3 and 5 lb. bags

Purchasing Tips

- Tangerines are one of three types of mandarins.
- Container should show either numerical count, size, or minimum diameter of fruit.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality: Heavy for size, deep orange color, puffy appearance.
- Reject fruit with soft spots, mold, water spots.

Storing

- Refrigerate immediately – 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Do not stack or drop cartons.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1771 to 51.1779; 51.1810; 51.1817

Sample Description

TANGERINES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; loose or tray pack; large or 150 count.

Sample Description

TANGERINES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; medium or 100 count; loose or tray pack.

Watermelon

FRESH

Sizes

Average 22 lb to 26 lb

Grades

U.S. Fancy
U.S. No. 1
U.S. No. 2

Popular varieties

Icebox type: Sugar Baby, Mickey Lee, Petite Sweet,
Yellow Doll, Tiger Baby

Picnic type: Jubilee, Crimson Sweet, Royal Sweet

Seedless type: Jack of Hearts, King of Hearts,
Queen of Hearts

Yellow flesh: Desert King, Tender Sweet,
Orangeglo, Tenderfold, Honeyhart

How Packed

3 to 5 melons per 85-lb paperboard carton

In Season

- Available year-round
- Peak season: May to August

Receiving

- Good quality melon should be ripe. Indicators are dry stem, yellow underside, dull (not shiny) rind.
- Exterior firm, symmetrical, with color and shape typical of variety.

Storing

- Store at room temperature.
- Store away from ethylene-producing fruits and vegetables.
- Keeps approximately 2 weeks.
- Handle melons carefully to prevent internal bruising.

Standard of Identity Reference

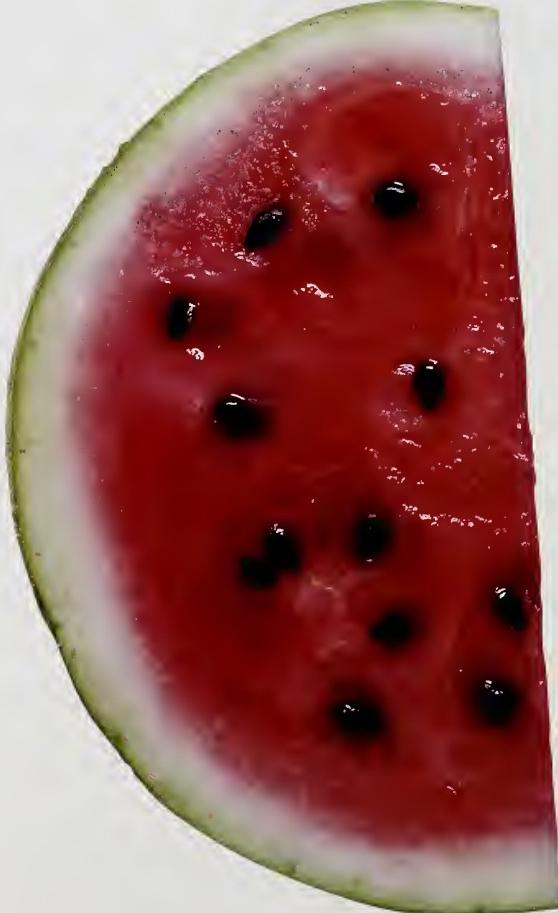
None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1970 to 51.1972

Sample Description

WATERMELON, FRESH: picnic variety; whole melons; to be packed to U.S. No. 1 standard; average 22 to 26 lb; 85 lb carton.



Vegetable

Product Sheets



SOURCE:

These product sheets were taken from Choice Plus, Publication Number FCS-297, a joint publication of USDA and the National Food Service Management Institute at The University of Mississippi.

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Beans, Green

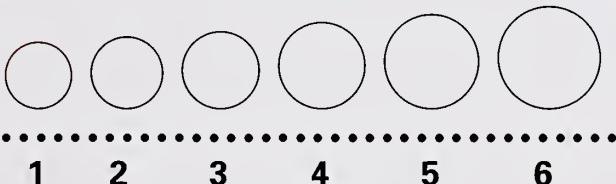
CANNED

Forms

- Whole (whole pods cut not less than $1\frac{3}{4}$ -inch long, or transversely cut not less than $2\frac{3}{4}$ -inch long)
- Whole vertical pack (whole pods, relatively uniform in length and packed parallel to sides of can)
- Whole "asparagus" pack (whole pods, cut at both ends, equal lengths, and packed parallel to sides of can)
- French (pods sliced lengthwise)
- Cut (cuts between $\frac{3}{4}$ inch and $2\frac{3}{4}$ inch)
- Short cut (pieces of which 75% or more are at least $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch long, and not more than 1% are more than $1\frac{1}{4}$ -inch long)
- Mixed (two or more styles in the same can)



Sizes



#1 (smallest) through #6 (largest)

Grades

- U.S. Grade A or U. S. Fancy
- U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
- U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
- Substandard

Popular Varieties

- Bush
- Green pod (Blue Lake)
- Romano or Italian

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Smaller bean sizes cost more; whole and French forms cost more.
- Snap beans (regional term) may be green or wax beans.
- Minimum drained weight per can: whole, $57\frac{1}{2}$ oz; French, 59 oz; cut, 60 oz; short cut and mixed, 63 oz.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 155.120

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.449

Sample Description

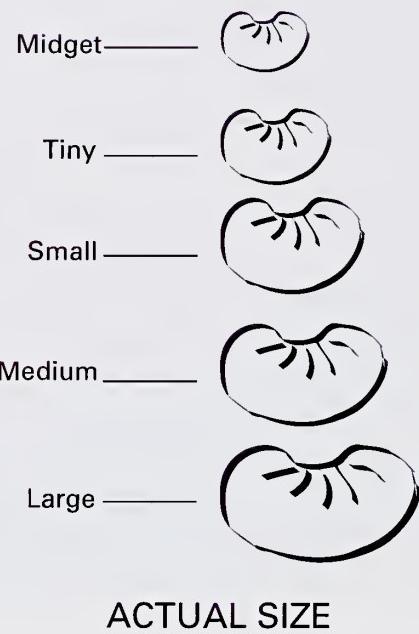
BEANS, GREEN, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; Blue Lake variety; #3 size; cut; 6/10.

Beans, Lima

ITEM

CODE

Sizes



Purchasing Tips

- "Baby" describes variety, not size of bean.
- "Butter bean" is term used in U.S. South for small lima beans.
- U.S. Grade B is institutional preference.
- If the description does not specify pack size, the bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.503

Sample Description

LIMA BEANS, FROZEN: medium size; to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; thick-seeded or thin-seeded.

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard

Popular Varieties

Thick-seeded varieties: Baby Potato, Baby Fordhook, Evergreen

Thin-seeded varieties: Henderson, Bush, Thorogreen

How Packed

2 1/2-lb packages, 12 per case
20 lb bulk

Beans, Snap

FRESH

Grades

U.S. Fancy

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2



Popular Varieties

Green

Yellow wax

How Packed

15- to 22-lb. Cartons

30-lb bushel containers

Beans, yellow wax

10-lb. bulk

Purchasing Tips

Grade differences mainly due to exterior appearance.

Receiving

- Inspect for long, straight pods with good color that snap easily when bent.
- Reject beans with decay or blemishes

Storage

- Store in coolest part of storeroom or warmest part of refrigerator – 45-50° F/7-10° C, 85-95 % humidity.
- Store away from ethylene producing fruits and vegetables.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3830 through 51.3844

Sample Description

BEANS, SNAP, GREEN: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; 30-lb. bushel container.

Beets

CANNED

Sizes

Small – One inch to not over 2 inches in diameter

Medium – Over 2 inches to not over 3 inches in diameter.

Large – Over 3 inches in diameter.

Grades

U.S. No.1

U.S. No.2

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 cans per case

Purchasing Tips

- Canned beets are available whole, sliced, quartered, diced, and in strips.
- Beets prepared in a slightly thickened, sweet vinegar sauce are called Harvard beets.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.375 through 51.394

Sample Description

BEETS, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 grade, #10 cans, 6 per case.



Broccoli

FRESH

Grades

- U.S. Fancy
- U.S. No. 1
- U.S. No. 2
- Unclassified (ungraded)

How Packed

- 23-lb box (14 to 18 bunches)

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Grade differences are mainly due to exterior appearance.
- Order broccoli by count; 14 count most popular.

Receiving

- Inspect for firm, compact clusters of small flower buds, no visible yellow, dark green or sage green with purple cast; stalks light green about 5 inches long.
- Thick stems, open bud clusters, and yellow color are signs of poor quality.

Storing

- Refrigerate immediately, temperature fluctuations cause rapid deterioration – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Mist lightly with water. Do not wash or soak until ready to serve. Icing increases storage time.
- Storage maximum is 5 days.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3555 to 51.3558

Sample Description

BROCCOLI, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; 14 count; 23 lb box.



Broccoli Florets

FRESH CUT

How Packed

- 3-lb bags, 4 per case
- 18 lb loose

In Season

Available year-round



Purchasing Tips

- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Pre-cut spears also are available.
- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags; product that is discolored, slimy, or wet.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use. Handle carefully to maintain air-tight seal to maximize storage time.
- Use on first-in, first-out basis.



Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

BROCCOLI FLORETS, FRESH CUT: sulfite-free; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated; 4/3 lb only.

Broccoli

FROZEN

Forms

Spears or stalks, 3- to 6-inch lengths
Short spears or florets, 1- to 3-inch lengths
Cut, $\frac{3}{4}$ - to 2-inch pieces
Chopped, $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch or less
Pieces (product that does not meet standard for
chopped or cut)



Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)

How Packed

Spears: 2-lb packages, 12 per case
4-lb packages, 6 per case
Cut: 1-lb packages, 12 per case
2-lb packages, 12 per case
 $2\frac{1}{2}$ -lb packages, 12 per case
4-lb packages, 6 per case
20 lb bulk

Purchasing Tips

- Spears are most expensive; cut or chopped most in demand.
- U.S. Grade A recommended for best customer acceptance.
- If description does not specify pack preference, bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.637

Sample Description

BROCCOLI, FROZEN: spears; to be packed to U.S.
Grade A standard; 12/2 lb or 6/4 lb only.

Sample Description

BROCCOLI, FROZEN: cut; to be packed to U.S.
Grade A standard; 12/2 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb only.

Broccoli/Cabbage Coleslaw Mix

FRESH CUT

How Packed

5-lb bags, 4 per case

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags; product that is discolored, slimy, or wet.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use. Handle carefully to maintain air-tight seal to maximize storage time.
- Use on first-in, first-out basis.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

BROCCOLI/CABBAGE COLESLAW MIX, FRESH CUT: sulfite-free; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated; 4/5 lb.

Cabbage

FRESH

Sizes

Per Federal Regulations:

Small: Pointed*, under 1 1/2 lb; Danish and domestic, under 2 lb

Medium: Pointed*, 1 1/2 lb to 3 lb; Danish and domestic, 2 lb to 5 lb

Large: Pointed*, over 3 lb; Danish and domestic, over 5 lb

*Pointed is any early variety with conical heads

Per Industry Standards:

By number in container:

8 to 10 count (largest head)

10 to 12 count

12 to 16 count (smallest head)

Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Commercial

Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Danish: Similar to domestic but leaves more compact, almost white except for outer leaves, stores and ships well

Domestic: Most popular, round head, light green leaves, compact

Early: Conical-shaped (pointed), loosely packed heads

Red: Round head, dark purple leaves, compact

Savoy: Yellow-green, crinkled leaves, loosely compacted

How Packed

50-lb cartons and snacks

40-lb cartons

1 3/4-bushel crates

In Season

- Available year-round
- Early variety: December to May

Purchasing Tips

Large heads (8 count) are best for making slaw. Medium heads are best for most other uses.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Heads should be reasonably sound and hard, heavy for size, closely trimmed; stems with larger outer leaves cut close to head.
- Reject wilted, light heads; broken heads; heads with decay, moist rot, seed stems, worms, yellowing leaves, detached leaves.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator; keep cold, moist, and well ventilated – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Store uncut and untrimmed; leave outer leaves in place.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.450 to 51.452

Sample Description

CABBAGE, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; Danish or Domestic; 8 count/50 lb.



Coleslaw

INFORMATION

How Packed

5-lb bags, 4 per case

Some 3-lb and 10-lb bags are available

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Usual mix is green cabbage, carrots, and red cabbage.
- Description can require red cabbage to be packaged separately.
- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.
- The bid unit should be per lb.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags; product that is discolored, slimy, or wet.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use. Handle carefully to maintain air-tight seal to maximize storage time.
- Use on first-in, first-out basis.



Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

COLESLAW, FRESH CUT: sulfite-free; product to contain only green cabbage; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated.

Sample Description

COLESLAW MIX, FRESH CUT: sulfite-free; product to contain green cabbage, carrots, and package of red cabbage; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated.

Carrots

FRESH

Sizes

Jumbo: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ - to 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch diameter, minimum 5 inch long

Medium or Large: $\frac{3}{4}$ - to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch diameter, minimum 5 inch long

Baby carrots

Grades

U.S. Extra No. 1

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 1 Jumbo

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

How Packed

1-, 2-, 5-, 10-, 25-, and 50-lb bags—medium or jumbo

1-lb bag, 40 per carton

1-lb bag, 24 per carton

5-lb bag—baby carrots

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Baby carrots are available but more expensive.
- Medium carrots are the choice of most users.

Receiving

- Inspect for firmness (should break with crisp snap when bent); should be bright orange or red color, fresh-looking, smooth.
- Signs of poor quality: carrots that are wilted, flabby, soft or shriveled, or have decayed areas.

Storing

- Refrigerate immediately – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Carrots develop bitter taste if stored near ethylene-producing fruits, such as apples, grapes, peaches, pears and plums.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2360 to 51.2364

Sample Description

CARROTS, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; medium size; 24/1 lb.



Carrot Sticks

FRESH CUT

Sizes

2-inch or 3-inch length

How Packed

5-lb bags, 4 per case

In Season

Available year-round



Purchasing Tips

- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags; product that is discolored, slimy, or wet.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use.

Preparation Tips

A dry, chalky appearance indicates dehydration. Plunge in ice water to restore texture and appearance; drain well.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

CARROT STICKS, FRESH CUT: 3 inch length; sulfite-free; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated; 4/5 lb.

Carrots

FROZEN

Forms

Whole
Halves
Quarters
Slices, plain or crinkle cut
Dices
Double dices
Strips or shoestrings
Chips
Cuts

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U. S. Fancy
(all styles except chips)
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)

How Packed

2 1/2 -lb packages, 12 per case
20 lb bulk
4-lb packages, 6 per case
Size of pack may vary with form ordered.

Purchasing Tips

- Slices available cut either 1/4-inch or 3/8-inch thick, diameter sizes 5/8-inch to 1 1/8-inch.
- Dices are 3/8 -inch cubes.
- If description does not specify pack preference, bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.703

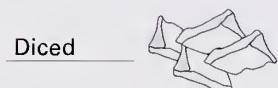
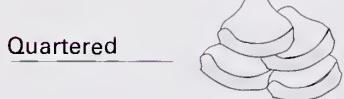
Sample Description

CARROTS, FROZEN: slices; to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; 1/4 inch thick; maximum diameter 1 inch; 12/2 1/2 lb only.

Carrots

CANNED

Forms



Sizes

Applies only to slices:

Less than 1 1/2-inch diameter

1 1/2-inch diameter and more

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U. S. Fancy

U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard

Substandard

(There is no Grade B.)

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Minimum drained weight varies by form:
67 oz for whole and sliced less than 1 1/2-inch diameter; 66 oz for whole and sliced more than 1 1/2-inch diameter; 70 oz for diced; 68 oz for quartered; 64 oz for julienne.
- Proposed use determines form and style specified in product description. Diced and sliced forms preferred in institutional service.
- The cut form indicates uneven shape, does not conform to any other form standard.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 155.200

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.673

Sample Description

CARROTS, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; sliced; size less than 1 1/2 inch; 6/10.



Cauliflower

FRESH

Sizes

By number of heads per container:
6 count
9 count
12 count
16 count (smallest)

Grades

U.S. No. 1
U.S. Commercial
Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Veitch Autumn Giant (late)
Snowdrift, Danish Giant (mid-season)
Early Snowball, Super Snowball (early)

How Packed

34 lb average weight (varies with count)
50 lb to 60 lb bulk, in crates

In Season

- Available year-round
- Peak season: October to January

Receiving

- Inspect for quality: Clean, firm, compact heads; jacket leaves fresh, green, and brittle; head creamy white. Poor quality: loose, open flower clusters, off color or dried-looking curds.
- Check for head size specified. Head size does not affect quality but does affect yield.

Storing

- Refrigerate immediately. Keep cold and humid. Keep wrapped and covered – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Use as soon as possible; old cauliflower acquires strong taste and odor.
- Wash just before using; moisture hastens decay.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.540 to 51.542

Sample Description

CAULIFLOWER, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; trimmed heads; 12 count carton.



Cauliflower

FRESH CUT

How Packed

3-lb packages, 4 per case

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags, or product that is discolored or slimy.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use. Handle carefully to maintain air-tight seal to maximize storage time.
- Use on first-in, first-out basis.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

CAULIFLOWER, FLORETS, FRESH CUT: sulfite-free; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated; 4/3 lb.

Celery

FRESH

Sizes

16-inch stalks

Grades

- U.S. Extra No. 1
- U.S. No. 1
- U.S. No. 2
- Unclassified (ungraded)



Popular Varieties

Pascal
Green

How Packed

50-lb to 60-lb crates

Small stalks: 36 count per case

Medium stalks: 24 count per case

Large stalks: 18 count per case

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Available in plastic sleeve or unsleeved.
- Grade differences mainly due to exterior appearance.

Receiving

Inspect for crisp, clean, straight stalks; leaves that are fresh, green, not wilted.

Storing

- Store in refrigerator; maintain good air circulation – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Refrigerate until ready to use. Moist celery mildews at room temperature and may wilt.
- Product is odor sensitive. Do not store near apples, carrots, onions, or pears.
- Will dehydrate if left uncovered. Ice water bath will restore moisture.
- If not sleeved, mist lightly.
- Shelf life is 14 to 28 days from harvest or 5 to 7 days at preparation site.

Celery

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.560 to 51.563

Sample Description

CELERY, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; sleeved pack, 18/cs.

Corn on the Cob

FRESH



Grades

U.S. Fancy

U.S. Fancy, Husked

U.S. No.1

U.S. No. 1, Husked

U.S. No. 2

Popular Varieties

Sweet Corn

Yellow Corn

White Corn

How Packed

42-lb. crates holding 4, 4 1/2, or 5 dozen ears

Purchasing Tips

Grade differences mainly due to exterior appearance.

Receiving

- Inspect for fresh green husks with silk ends free of decay or worms. Ears should be evenly covered with plump, consistently sized kernels.
- Reject corn with dry, discolored husks, stem ends or kernels.

Corn on the Cob

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Storing

- Store in refrigerator with good air circulation and humidity – 32-36 degrees F/0-2 degrees C, 95 % relative humidity.
- Refrigerate until ready to use.
- For best quality, use soon after receiving.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7CFR 51.835 through 51.845

Sample Description

CORN ON THE COB, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Husked Grade standard; yellow or golden; 4 1/2 dozen per 42-lb. crate.

Corn, Cream Style

FROZEN

Grades

No grade standards

Popular Varieties

Golden or yellow

White

How Packed

4-lb packages, 12 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Cream-style is produced from whole kernel corn, which is mashed, mixed with sugar, salt, and cornstarch, and heated. Most packers use 3:1 proportion cream to whole kernels.
- Description may require cream-style corn to be processed from U.S. Grade A whole kernel corn.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

CORN, CREAM-STYLE, FROZEN: to be processed from U.S. Grade A standard whole kernel corn; 12/4 lb.

Corn on the Cob

FROZEN

Forms

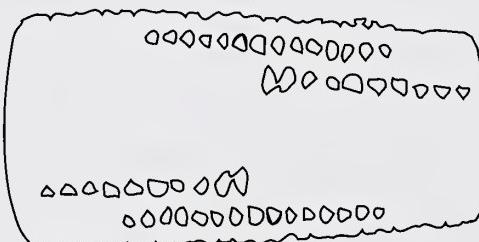
Trimmed: Trimmed at both ends, cut to specific lengths

Natural: Trimmed at stalk end only

Sizes



Regular (ear 3 1/2 inches or more)



Cobbette (ear less than 3 1/2 inches)

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy

U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard

Substandard

(There is no Grade C standard.)

Popular Varieties

Golden or yellow

White



How Packed

Regular: 96 count, 48 count, 36 count, 12 count per case

Short (cobbettes): 150 count, 96 count, 48 count, 24 count per case

Purchasing Tips

If description does not specify pack preference, bid unit should be per dozen.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.935

Sample Description

CORN ON THE COB, FROZEN: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; yellow or golden, trimmed; short (cobbettes); 96/case only.

Corn, Whole-Kernel

FROZEN



Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard

Popular Varieties

Golden or yellow
White

How Packed

20 lb bulk
2 1/2 -lb packages, 12 per case
2-lb packages, 12 per case
5-lb packages, 6 per case
4-lb packages, 6 per case
2 1/2 -lb packages, 3 per case

Purchasing Tips

If description does not specify pack preference,
bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.913

Sample Description

CORN, WHOLE-KERNEL, FROZEN:
to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; yellow or
golden; 20 lb only.

Corn, Whole-Kernel

CANNED

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard

Popular Varieties

Golden or yellow
White (shoepeg)

How Packed

Wet pack: #10 cans, 6 per case
Vacuum pack: #10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Minimum drained weights: vacuum pack
75 oz per can, wet pack 70 oz per can.
- Vacuum pack liquid 20% or less by weight; wet
pack liquid is brine.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 155.130

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.883

Sample Description

CORN, WHOLE-KERNEL, CANNED: to be packed to
U.S. Grade A standard; Golden; vacuum pack; 6/10.

Cucumbers

FRESH

Sizes

- Small:** Shorter than 6 inch
- Medium:** Approximately 6 inch long
- Large:** Longer than 6 ½ inch

Grades

- U.S. Fancy
- U.S. Extra No. 1
- U.S. No. 1
- U.S. No. 1 Small
- U.S. No. 1 Large
- U.S. No. 2
- Unclassified (ungraded)

Industry grading standards (not USDA) by size only:

- Super Select (best medium size)
- Select
- Small Select
- Small
- Large
- Plain (off grade)

Popular Varieties

- Ashley
- Cherokee 7
- Gemini
- Palomar
- Poinsett
- Straight 8

How Packed

55lb. 1 ¼ bushel cartons

In Season

- Available year-round
- Peak season: March to November

Purchasing Tips

- Specify slicing or pickling type.
- U.S. No. 1 Grade is suitable in season; off season U.S. Fancy of same size has fewer defects.

Receiving

- Inspect for fresh appearance, medium size, good shape, shiny or waxy surface, green color over at least two-thirds of the exterior.
- Reject if dark, sunken areas indicating decay; if color is yellowish green; underside is yellow, texture is soft; or ends sunken or wrinkled.

Storing

- Schools do not usually have ideal conditions for storing cucumbers. 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity. Plan menus to use within 2 days of receipt.
- At temperatures that are too high, cucumbers ripen rapidly and turn yellow. At temperatures that are too low, cucumbers develop pitting and tissue collapse.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2220 to 51.2226

Sample Description

CUCUMBER, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. Fancy Grade standard; medium size; slicing type; 22 lb carton.



Garlic*

Sizes

Giant
Jumbo
Extra Jumbo
Super Jumbo
Colossal
Super Colossal



Grades

U.S. No. 1

Note: Not all garlic is graded. Ungraded garlic is called "unclassified."

Popular Varieties

Regular
Elephant

In Season

Available year-round

How Packed

5-, 10-, and 30-lb. bulk cartons
Jars holding whole peeled or pureed garlic

Purchasing Tips

- Select firm, plump bulbs with tightly closed cloves.
- Based on rate of usage, peeled garlic in jars may be an option.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Outside sheath or skin should be tight and unbroken.
- Reject shriveled, soft, sprouting or moldy bulbs.

Storing

- Store at 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Maintain adequate air circulation during storage.
- For storage longer than 7 days, reduce humidity to 65-75%.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3880 through 51.3888

Jicama*

FRESH

Grades

No U.S. Grade standards given

How Packed

10-, and 20-lb. bulk cartons

In Season

- Import Production
- Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- May be served raw or cooked.
- May be substituted for water chestnuts.
- Resembles a turnip in appearance with round, slightly squat shape, light brown skin and ivory flesh.

Receiving

- Inspect for firm texture and smooth, unblemished skin.
- Reject shriveled or moldy jicama.

Storing

- Store at 60-65°/16-18°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Keep product dry to avoid molding.
- Do not store jicama below 55°F/13°C.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

No grade standard exists.

Sample Description

JICAMA, FRESH: firm, smooth, unblemished skin, 10-lb carton.



Lettuce and Lettuce-type Greens

Sizes

Iceberg:
18, 24, 30 count

Grades

Iceberg, Bibb:
U.S. Fancy
U.S. No. 1
U.S. No. 2

Endive, Escarole, Romaine:
U.S. No. 1

Kale:
U.S. No. 1
U.S. Commercial

Spinach:
U.S. Extra No. 1
U.S. No. 1
U.S. Commercial
Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Lettuce:
Butterhead: Boston, Bibb, Limestone
Cos: Romaine
Crisphead: Iceberg
Looseleaf: Bunched or garden

Other Greens:
Chicory
Endive
Escarole
Kale
Spinach: Savoy, Broadleaf

How Packed

Iceberg, not wrapped, 50 lb to 55 lb:
30, 24, 18 counts; cello wrapped,
42 lb to 45 lb: 30, 24, 18 counts
Bibb: 10-lb to 20-lb cartons
Endive and escarole: 30 lb, 24 count western
pack; and 25 lb, 24 count eastern pack
Romaine: 40 lb; (24 count) western pack;
22 lb to 24 lb (24 count) eastern pack

Spinach: 10-oz packages, 12 per carton
(eastern); 2 1/2-lb packages, 4 per carton
(western); 22 lb loose, varying counts

Kale: 25-lb crate, 24 count

In Season

- Iceberg, endive, escarole available year-round
- Romaine peak season: November to December
- Spinach peak season: January to February and June to August
- Kale peak season: November to April

Purchasing Tips

- Many greens are not graded.
- Romaine does not ship or hold well.
- Carton weight of greens purchased by count varies slightly from weights listed under How Packed.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. **Iceberg**: Heads should give slightly but be firm and springy, and be free from damage or blemishes. Poor quality heads are heavy for size (indicating over-maturity); have reddish tinge, broken surfaces.
- **Endive and escarole**: Should be fresh and crisp. Endive has very curly edges on leaves. Escarole has slightly wrinkled leaves. Wilted yellowing leaves, cracked ribs, or dark stem ends are indications of poor quality.
- **Kale**: Should be fresh with good color. Wilted yellowing leaves indicate poor quality.
- **Spinach**: Should have dark green color and clean, fresh, crisp leaves. Wilted, long stems indicate poor quality.

Storing

- Store immediately in tightly covered container in coldest part of refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Store away from ethylene producing fruits (apples, bananas, pears, tomatoes).
- Store uncut and untrimmed; leave outer leaves in place.

Lettuce and Lettuce-type Greens

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Preparation Tips

- Core iceberg heads by tapping sharply on counter, core side down, then twist core out.
- Wash in cold water, drain, and refrigerate to crisp.
- Wash kale and spinach in several rinses to remove sand.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2510 to 51.2512 (lettuce)

Title 7 CFR 51.3295 (romaine)

Title 7 CFR 51.3535 to 51.3537 (endive, escarole, chicory)

Title 7 CFR 51.1730 to 51.1732 (spinach)

Title 7 CFR 51.3930 to 51.3931 (kale)



Leafy Greens

FROZEN

Forms

Whole leaf
Sliced leaf
Cut or chopped
Pureed

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)

Popular Varieties

Beet greens
Collard
Dandelion
Endive
Kale
Mustard
Spinach
Swiss chard
Turnip
Any other "market accepted" leafy greens

How Packed

Mustard, collard, kale and turnip greens:
3-lb packages, 12 per case
Package size varies with variety

Purchasing Tips

U.S. Grade A is recommended for whole leaves;
U.S. Grade B is satisfactory for cut or chopped
greens.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.1376

Sample Description

LEAFY GREENS, FROZEN: mustard; cut or chopped;
to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; 12/3 lb.

Mixed Vegetables

CANNED

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Large volume purchasers may use USDA's Commercial Item Description (CID) A-A-20120A. Summary:
Vegetables used shall be U.S. Grade A, except corn and peas which may be U.S. Grade B. Packing medium shall be clear and free from sediment.
Additives permitted by U.S. Food and Drug Administration may be used.
Product may contain small pieces of onion, red and green peppers for garnish, to total 2% or less of drained weight.
Minimum drained weight 65 oz per can.
Product to contain seven vegetables in the following percentages of drained weight:
Carrots, diced, $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch cube: 33% to 52%
Potatoes, diced: 17% to 35%
Lima beans, thin seeded: 1% to 12%
Peas, sweet: 3% to 12%
Beans, green, short cut or mixed: 3% to 12%
Corn, yellow, whole kernel: 4% to 8%
Celery, $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cut: 2% to 9%
Combined weight of potatoes and carrots not to exceed 72%
- Ingredients and percentages vary by processor.
- CID number A-A-20120A may be used in product description. However, on small orders distributors will offer price on in-stock product.
- To compare brands, examine order of ingredients on product label relative to price of product.
- Prior approval of brands may be necessary to get quality desired.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

MIXED VEGETABLES, CANNED: to be packed to standard of commercial item description A-A-20120A; 6/10.

Mushrooms*

FRESH

Sizes: (Agaricus/White)

Small – up to 1 1/4"
Medium – 1 1/4" to 1 3/4"
Large – 1 3/4" and over

Counts per pound:

Small – approximately 89
Medium – approximately 43
Large – approximately 23

Grades

U.S. No. 1
U.S. No. 2

Note: Not all mushrooms are graded. Ungraded mushrooms are called "unclassified." Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance.

Popular Varieties

Agaricus (White)
Chanterelle
Crimini (Italian Brown)
Enoki
Morel
Oyster
Porcini
Portabella
Shitake (Oak, Chinese or Black Forest)
Woodear



How Packed

Agaricus/Crimini: 5-and 10-lb. containers
Enoki: Cases holding 12 to 24 bags
(3- to 5-oz. each)
Shitake: 3- and 5-lb. containers
Portabella: 5-lb. containers
Oyster: 3-, 4-, and 5-lb. containers

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Agaricus (White) is the most widely available variety.
- May be used raw or cooked.
- Other varieties vary on whether they can be used raw.

Receiving

- Inspect for fresh, well-shaped appearance, firm texture and free of spots.
- Open veins on certain varieties such as Agaricus indicate a more mature mushroom.
- Reject mushrooms that show signs of deterioration, mold, or that appear slimy.

Storing

- Store in refrigerator at 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Store in original containers.
- Do not store in plastic bags.
- Keep away from foods with strong odors.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3385 through 51.3398

Sample Description

MUSHROOMS, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 grade, Agaricus, medium, 5-lb. container.

Okra*

FRESH

Grades

U.S. No. 1

Note: Not all okra is graded. Ungraded okra is called "unclassified."

How Packed

Bushel baskets, crates, cartons, and hampers of various weights.

In Season

Available year-round.

Purchasing Tips

- Pods range in size from 2-7 inches.
- Look for pods with shallow ridges and fuzzy, green exterior.
- Okra is very perishable; use soon after receiving



Receiving

- Inspect for bruising, pitting, or decay.
- Reject pods with yellow or black discoloration or shriveling.

Storing

- Store at 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity
- Keep okra away from ethylene-producing fruits and ripening rooms.
- Keep handling to a minimum.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3945 through 51.3948

Sample Description

OKRA, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; domestic product to be provided when available; growing location to be provided with price quotes.

Onions, Dry

FRESH

Sizes

Small: 1-inch to 2 1/4 -inch diameter

Medium: 2-inch to 3 1/4 -inch diameter

Jumbo or Large: 3-inch diameter and up

(5% may be smaller than specified diameter;
10% may be larger)

Popular Varieties

Bermuda, Granex, Grano: Mild flavored, crisp, early varieties

Creole, Ehenezes, Australian, Brown, White, Portugal: Strong flavored varieties

Globe, Sweet Spanish, South Pork: Moderate to strong flavor, large size, late varieties

Vidalia, Walla Walla, Main Sweet, Sweet Imperial, Texas Supersweet: Sweet varieties

Grades

Standards for Bermuda and Creole Type:

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Combination

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Standards for Other Types:

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Export No. 1

U.S. Commercial

U.S. No. 1 Boilers (smaller than U.S. No. 1, diameter 1-inch to 1 7/8-inch)

U.S. No. 1 Picklers (diameter 1-inch or less)

U.S. No. 2

How Packed

5, 10, 25-lb and 50-lb bags

40-lb and 50-lb cartons

In Season

Available year-round; each growing region has peak season.

Onions, Dry

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Purchasing Tips

- Bermuda is an excellent all-purpose onion.
- Soil conditions, climate, and variety – not color – determine flavor.
- The most pungent raw onions are the sweetest when cooked.
- Sweet varieties not appropriate for institutional food service due to short shelf life.
- If description does not specify pack preference, the bid unit should be per lb.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Onion should have firm, well shaped, short neck; dry and papery outer skin; flesh juicy and crisp; free of green spots, blemish, decay or mold.
- Reject onions with sprouts, soft flesh, or thick, hollow, woody stems.

Storing

- Store in dry, cool, well-ventilated area – 60-65°F/16-18°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Store away from foods that absorb odors.
- Do not store with potatoes because onions draw water from other foods.
- Storage life for most varieties is several months.
- Vidalia, Walla Walla, and Maui have high sugar and moisture content and should be used quickly.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2830 to 51.2836 and 51.3195 to 51.3198

Sample Description

ONIONS, DRY, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; medium size; Bermuda; 25 lb bag only.

Onions, Green

FRESH

Sizes

Small: Less than $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch diameter

Medium: $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch to 1-inch diameter

Large: 1-inch diameter and up



Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. No. 2

Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

White Lisbon

How Packed

10 to 30 lb cartons with 12, 24, 35, or 48 bunches
12 count bags, 4 bags per case

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- U.S. No 1, medium size, preferred.
- Green onions are immature plants that may have bulbs but must have green tops.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Necks should be medium-size and well blanched 2 to 3 inches above root.
- Reject if wilted or tops discolored.

Storing

- Store in coldest part of refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.
- Storage life is 7 to 10 days. Mist lightly with water to extend storage life.
- Store away from foods that absorb odors.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1055 to 51.1057

Sample Description

ONIONS, GREEN, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; medium size; 48 count.

Peas and Carrots

FROZEN



Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard

How Packed

2 1/2-lb packages, 12 per case
4-lb packages, 6 per case
20 lb bulk

Purchasing Tips

- Grade standards are based on percentages of each vegetable; size of carrot pieces; color; tenderness after cooking; flavor; absence of defects and blemishes.
- Proportions: Early or sweet type peas not less than 50% by weight; diced carrots not less than 25% by weight. Carrots to be predominantly 1/4- to 3/8-inch cubes.
- U.S. Grade A recommended, appearance affects customer acceptance.
- If the description does not specify pack size, the bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.2503

Sample Description

PEAS AND CARROTS, FROZEN: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard.

Peas and Carrots

CANNED

Carrot Forms

Sliced
Diced
Double diced
Strips

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Proportions: Peas not less than 50% of drained weight; carrots not less than 25% of drained weight.
- Minimum drained weight 70 oz per can if carrots sliced or strips, 71 oz if carrots diced or double diced.
- Packing medium: With salt, without salt, and other ingredients.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.6203

Sample Description

PEAS AND CARROTS, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; carrots to be diced; packing medium to be without salt; 6/10.

Peas, Field

FROZEN

Forms

Frozen peas
Frozen peas with snaps

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Standard
Substandard
(There is no Grade C standard.)

Popular Varieties

Blackeyed
Cream or White Acre
Crowder
Purple Hull

How Packed

2 1/2 -lb packages, 12 per case
20 lb bulk

Purchasing Tips

- Field peas is generic name for different varieties.
- Variety selected should be specified.
- Mixed peas are a combination of two or more varieties.
- If description does not specify pack preference, bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.1666

Sample Description

PEAS, FIELD, BLACKEYED, FROZEN: with snaps; to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; 20 lb only.

Peas, Field

CANNED

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
U.S. Grade D or Substandard
(There is no Grade B standard.)

Popular Varieties

Blackeyed
Blackeyed with snaps
Cream
Crowder
Purple Hull

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Characteristics determining grade are tenderness and maturity (called character). U.S. Grade A are tender and in a fairly early stage of maturity; U.S. Grade C are fairly tender but may be mealy.
- Minimum drained weight is 72 oz per can.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 155.200

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.1642

Sample Description

PEAS, FIELD, BLACKEYED, CANNED: with snaps; to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; 6/10.

Peas, Green

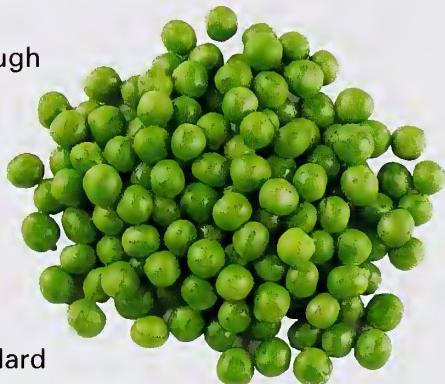
FROZEN

Sizes

#1 (smallest) through

#7 (largest)

Not sized



Grades

U.S. Grade A or

U.S. Fancy

U.S. Grade B or

U.S. Extra Standard

U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard

Substandard

Popular Varieties

- Smooth skin: Name can be used with terms "early," "June" or "early June."
- Sweet green wrinkled (Telephone is best freezing variety).

How Packed

2-lb packages, 12 per case

2 1/2-lb packages, 12 per case

5-lb packages, 6 per case

20 lb bulk

Purchasing Tips

- Grade standards do not specify sizes; however, some packers offer sized product.
- Smaller sizes are more expensive.
- If the description does not specify pack size, the bid unit should be per lb.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 158.170

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.3512

Sample Description

PEAS, GREEN, FROZEN: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; #3 or #4 size.

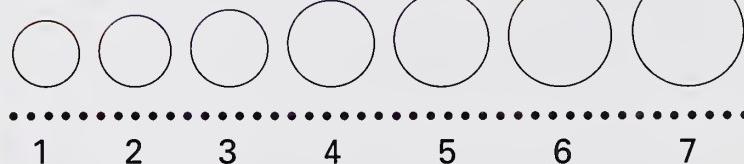
Sample Description

PEAS, GREEN, FROZEN: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; 20 lb bulk only.

Peas, Green

CANNED

Sizes



#1 (smallest) through #7 (largest)

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy

U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard

U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard

Popular Varieties

- Smooth skin: Name can be used with terms "early," "June" or "early June."
- Sweet green wrinkled.

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Minimum drained weight usually 70 oz to 72 oz.
- Although packers often use U.S. grade standards, most product packed is not U.S. graded. To specify a grade, a typical description would read "Packed to U.S. Grade (specify) standard." Defects in green peas are visible; therefore, Grade A is recommended.
- The smaller the size, the higher the cost. Lowest cost product is a mixture of sizes or one of the larger sizes. Specifying a size increases the cost but may improve customer acceptance.
- The term "petit pois" can be used only when 80% or more are size #1.

Standard of Identity Reference

Title 21 CFR 155.170

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.228

Sample Description

PEAS, GREEN, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; #3 size; 6/10.

Peas, Snap/Snow*

FRESH

Grades

U.S. No.1

U.S. Fancy

Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance.

Note: Not all peas are graded. Ungraded peas are called "unclassified."

Popular Varieties

Snow – flat green pods with small immature peas inside.

Green – Large, bright green pods that bulge away from round, mature peas inside.

Snap – Similar to but slightly smaller than green peas.

How Packed

30-lb. crates, bushel crates, and 1 1/9-bushel crates
10-lb. cartons

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Snow and snap peas may be eaten fresh or cooked; green peas must be cooked.
- Look for firm pods and good green coloring.

Receiving

- Inspect for green peas with well-filled pods with large round peas inside
- All varieties should have good green coloring with a soft, velvety touch.

Storing

- Refrigerate at 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity
- Keep peas away from ethylene-producing fruits and ripening rooms.
- Peas may shrivel or wilt if stored in an area with low humidity.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1375 through 51.1387

Sample Description

PEAS, SNAP/SNOW, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard, 10-lb. carton.



Bell Peppers

FRESH

Sizes

- Small
- Medium
- Large
- Extra large/Jumbo

Grades

- U.S. Fancy:** Minimum diameter 3-inch, minimum length 3 1/2-inch
- U.S. No. 1:** Minimum diameter 2 1/2-inch, minimum length 2 1/2-inch
- U.S. No. 2:** No size requirement

Popular Varieties

- Burlington
- California Wonder
- Chinese Giant
- Early Cal-Wonder
- Harris Early Giant
- Neopolitan
- Yolo Wonder

How Packed

- 15 to 35 lb bushel cartons or crates

In Season

- Available year-round
- Peak season: May to August

Purchasing Tips

- Bell peppers mature to various colors (red, yellow, purple), depending on variety; most are sold green. Some varieties are yellow at both immature and mature stage.
- Sugar content increases with maturity; red and yellow peppers are sweeter than green peppers.
- U.S. No. 1 grade preferred for institutional food service.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Peppers should be well formed, firm, glossy; rich green, red or yellow color; free from blemish or decay.
- Reject if pale or dull, have soft or mushy spots, or are decayed around stems.

Storing

- Store in coolest part of storeroom or warmest part of refrigerator. Risk of chill damage if stored at a temperature that is too cold – 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Typical shelf life is 8 to 10 days.
- Store away from ethylene producing fruits such as apples, bananas, pears.
- Store away from foods that absorb odors.

Preparation Tips

Wash quickly before serving; do not soak.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.3270 to 51.3273

Sample Description

PEPPERS, BELL, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; medium size; green color; 25 lb.



Potatoes, White and Red

FRESH

Grades

U.S. Extra No. 1
U.S. No. 1
U.S. Commercial
U.S. No. 2
Unclassified (ungraded)

Popular Varieties

Long white: White Rose
Round red: Norland, Red Pontiac, and Red McClure
Round white: Katahdin, Superior, Norchip, Sebago, Ontario, and Crystal
Russet: Norgold, Burbank, Centennial, Bel Rus, and Atlantic

How Packed

Applies to round whites and reds only:
100-lb bag
50-lb bag
5-lb, 10-lb, and 20-lb bags

In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Russet and long white variety are sized by count.
- Round white and red variety vary in size from 1 1/2 -inch to 3 3/4 -inch diameter, based on grade.
- Round white and red variety are generally not available by size.

Receiving

Potato should be firm and smooth (not wrinkled); free of soft dark spots, cut surfaces, and greenish color.

Storing

- Store at room temperature in cool, dark place with good air circulation.
- Do not refrigerate.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

7 CFR 51.1540 to 51.1544

Sample Description

POTATOES, WHITE, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; Russet; 120 size; 1/50 lb only.

Sample Description

POTATOES, RED, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; Red Round; 1/50 lb only.



Potatoes, White and Red

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Sizes

50 count
60 count
70 count
80 count
90 count
100 count
110 count
120 count

ACTUAL SIZE

Russet and
long white



Russet and long white

Size	No. in 50 lb	Wt. Range
50	49 to 52	12 to 19 oz
60	58 to 60	10 to 16 oz
70	66 to 72	9 to 15 oz
80	78 to 82	8 to 13 oz
90	90 to 95	7 to 12 oz
100	100 to 105	6 to 10 oz
110	108 to 115	5 to 9 oz
120	118 to 130	4 to 8 oz

From Washington State Potato Commission

Potatoes, French Fried

FROZEN



Forms

General cuts

Crinkle cut
Straight cut

Strips

Shoestring

Diced

Rissole

Nearly whole or large cuts

Other

Sizes

General cut, cross-section widths (inches):

$\frac{3}{8} \times \frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{5}{8} \times \frac{5}{8}$

Shoestring and thin strips, cross-section

widths (inches): $\frac{3}{16} \times \frac{3}{16}$, $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{5}{16} \times \frac{5}{16}$,

$\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{3}{8}$, $\frac{1}{4} \times \frac{5}{8}$

Length

Extra long: Minimum 80% are 2 inch or longer, and 30% of those must be 3 inch or longer.

Long: 70% are 2 inch or longer, and 15% of those are 3 inch or longer.

Medium: 50% are 2 inch or longer.

Short: Fewer than 50% are 2 inch or longer.

Line flow: Cut strips with no length designation.

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy (does not apply to strip style, short length)

U.S. Grade A Short or U.S. Fancy (applies to strip style, short length only)

U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
Substandard

Popular Varieties

Of 12 leading varieties, the two listed below are best for French fries because of high solids and low moisture content:

Long white: Russet Burbank

Round to oblong white: Katahdin

How Packed

5-lb packages, 6 per case

4-lb packages, 6 per case

4 1/2 -lb packages, 6 per case

6-lb packages, 6 per case

30 lb bulk

Purchasing Tips

- Percent solids determines eating quality. High solids and low moisture make fries that are mealy, not soggy.
- Typical shoestring French fries are 33.5% to 38.5% solids, including 5.5% to 6.5% fat by weight, with variations as shown below. The values show percentages of solids after processing and parfrying; that is, as shipped from packer.

	Top grade solids	Good grade solids
Shoestring, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch	34% to 38%	30% to 34%
Crinkle cut, $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch	30% to 34%	26% to 31%
Straight cut, $\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch	30% to 34%	26% to 30%
Steak (thick)	29% to 33%	26% to 28%

Potatoes, French Fried

FROZEN (CONTINUED)

- Cooking reduces moisture, raising solids. Above products could be up to 43% solids after cooking; that is, as served.
- Specify solid content in product description. Thin cuts require higher solid percentages than steak cuts or thick cuts. Verification of solids requires lab analysis; allow 2% variation.
- Processor terms may vary from standard; e.g., processor's "slim" cut is smaller than regular but larger than shoestring. Strip cut is traditional form.
- Steak cut is processor's term for cuts with a cross section width of $\frac{3}{8} \times \frac{3}{4}$ inch or larger.
- Most packers use their own grades, which usually parallel U.S. grade and length standards.
- French fries are available with seasoned coating or with a clear coating. The clear coating is potato starch. Potato starch improves holding time.
- Packing materials include poly-lined paper bags (pillo pak), cardboard cartons with or without overwrap, or poly-lined bulk pack.
- Pre-approving brands is the simplest way to assure quality and characteristics desired every time.
- Oven fries are processed differently and must be designated in description. Crinkle cuts are better for oven preparation than straight cuts. Length standards do not apply to oven fries.

Receiving

Make sure product is completely frozen when received; store immediately.

Storing

- Keep product completely frozen until cooked to minimize fat absorption and maximize crispness.
- Rotate packs to prevent moisture loss, ice crystals, and off odors.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.2395

Sample Description

POTATOES, FRENCH FRIES, FROZEN: oven-ready; to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; crinkle cut; $\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ inch; 30% to 34% solids; 6/5 lb. Approved brands: ABC Foods A103, DEF FoodsX502, PotsR29, TooP32.

Potatoes, Specialty, Formed

FROZEN

Sizes

Vary with form and manufacturer

Grades

No grade standards

How Packed

5-lb packages, 6 per case

30 lb bulk

24 lb bulk

Some forms sold by count

Purchasing Tips

- Products are made from mashed, cubed, shredded or chopped white potatoes; some coated with potato flour, starch, or flakes. Seasoning may be added before forming.
- Most of these products are known by trade names rather than generic terms.
- Request from manufacturer fortification information. Many processors fortify products with vitamins and minerals.
- Request from manufacturer sizes and number of servings per lb.
- Some products are processed for deep frying, some for oven cooking. State in description product for deep-fat frying or oven-ready.
- If the description does not specify pack size the bid unit should be per lb.

Receiving

Make sure product is completely frozen when received; store immediately.

Storing

- Keep product completely frozen until cooked to minimize fat absorption and maximize crispness.
- Rotate packs to prevent moisture loss, ice crystals, and off odors.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

POTATOES, SPECIALTY FORMED, FROZEN: oven-ready; to be cylinder (log) shaped; fortified with vitamin C; 45 to 55 per lb; 6/5 lb only; approved brands: ABC Foods1102, Pots5201, Hoods211.

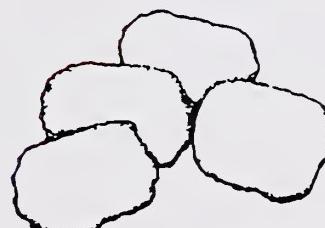
Sample Description

POTATOES, SPECIALTY FORMED, FROZEN: oven-ready, to be triangular shaped; 1 oz size; fortified with vitamin C; bulk pack only; approved brands: ABC555; DEF111; XYZ101.

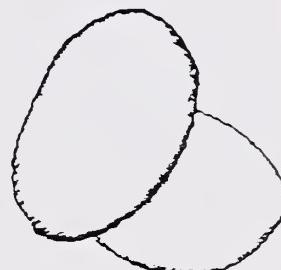
Sample Description

POTATOES, SPECIALTY FORMED, FROZEN: oven-ready; to be flat rounds, 59 to 64 per lb; approved brands: ABC1010; DEF2020; XYZ103.

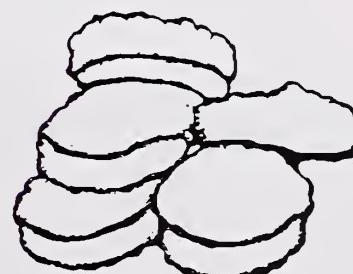
Forms



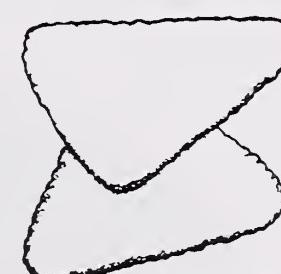
Cylinder (log)



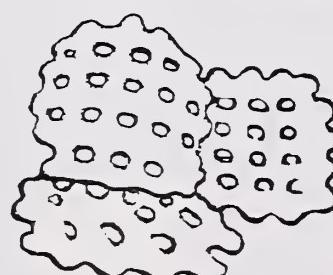
Flat Oval



Flat Round



Triangle or Wedge



Waffle

Potatoes, Whole White

FROZEN

Forms

Whole baked

Stuffed

Sizes

2 1/2 oz to 4 oz

4 oz

5 oz

6 oz

7 oz

8 oz

10 oz

How Packed

By number in container:

50 count weighs 10 oz

60 count weighs 8 oz

73 count weighs 7 oz

78 count weighs 6 oz

96 count weighs 5 oz

20 count weighs 4 oz

90 count weighs 2 1/2 oz

Purchasing Tips

- Stuffed potato is baked potato cut in half, flesh scooped and mashed with seasonings, seasoned mixture returned to shell in rosette or piped style, packed in trays or layers in a corrugated carton.
- Seasonings available for stuffed potatoes: Cheddar cheese, sour cream, sour cream and chives, gourmet and plain.
- Rissole style are whole or nearly whole potatoes of nearly the same size. Rissole style potatoes are used for baked and stuffed potatoes.
- Processed potatoes may be U.S. Grade A; however, there is no grade standard for processed baked or stuffed potatoes.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

POTATOES, WHOLE WHITE, FROZEN: baked; plain flavor; 4 oz size; 120 count.



Potatoes, Sweet

FRESH

Grades

- U.S. Extra No. 1
- U.S. No. 1
- U.S. Commercial
- U.S. No. 2

Popular Varieties

- Beauregard
- Garnet
- Hernandez
- Jewel

How Packed

- 10-, 20- and 40-lb cartons

In Season

- Available year-round
- Peak season: November to December

Purchasing Tips

- True yams are rare in the United States. Yam is a root, sweet potato a tuber; yam flesh is white, sweet potato is orange.
- Grade difference primarily size. U.S. No. 1 is 3- to 9-inch long, 1 3/4- to 3 1/4-inch diameter; larger potatoes may be U.S. No. 2.
- If description does not specify pack size, bid unit should be per lb.

Receiving

- Potato should be clean, smooth, well-shaped, firm and bright in appearance, with blemish-free skin.
- Decay appears as discolored, shriveled, or sunken areas. Decay causes unpleasant flavor even to unaffected parts.

Storing

Store in cool, dark place at room temperature – 60-65°F.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

7 CFR 51.1600 to 51.1603

Sample Description

POTATOES, SWEET, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 standard; Beauregard.



Radishes

FRESH

Grades

U.S. No. 1

U.S. Commercial



Popular Varieties

Red globe: Round, bright red exterior and crisp white interior. This is the most popular variety.

White: Round, white exterior and interior

How Packed

6-oz, 8-oz, 1-lb and 5-lb bags per carton

15-35-lb bulk carton

25-lb to 40-lb bulk bags

10-lb bulk packages



In Season

• Available year-round

• Peak season:

February to May

Receiving

- Inspect for pithiness. Should be firm, bright color, with crisp, white flesh.

- Reject radishes with external damage or with dry, wilted or spongy appearance.

Storing

- Store radishes with tops iced.

- Refrigerate topped radishes in coldest part of refrigerator – 32-36°F/0-2°C, 90-98% relative humidity.

Standard of Identity

Reference

None



Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.2397 to 51.2398

Sample Description

RADISHES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; Red globe; 14/1 lb.

Salad Mix

FRESH CUT



How Packed

20-lb cartons with 1-, 2-, 3- and 5-lb bags

3lb. cartons of bulk product

In Season

Available year-round

Varieties

European-style mixes - Various combinations of chopped iceberg, romaine, endive, escarole, radicchio, butter, and leaf lettuce.

Iceberg lettuce mixes - Chopped iceberg lettuce combined with shredded carrots and red cabbage. Other salad mixes may include a combination of iceberg lettuce, romaine, shredded carrots, and shredded red cabbage.

Mesclun mixes - Combination of a variety of specialty/baby lettuces and greens such as red or green oak leaf, red or green leaf, red or green romaine, little gem, lollo rossa, tango, mache, frisee, mizuna, and radicchio.

Purchasing Tips

- Shredded lettuce may be cut in various sizes, from $\frac{1}{16}$ -inch to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch.
- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Prices of pre-cut produce generally are more stable than comparable fresh produce.

Salad Mix

FRESH CUT (CONTINUED)

- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags; product that is discolored, slimy, or wet.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

SALAD MIX, FRESH CUT: product to be made with shredded iceberg lettuce, carrots, and cabbage; shredded lettuce uniformly cut $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch widths; sulfite-free; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated; 4/5 lb.

Spinach

FRESH CUT

How Packed

- 10-oz bags,
12 per case
- 2 1/2-lb bags,
4 per case



In Season

Available year-round

Purchasing Tips

- Specify packaging material with gas permeability rate that assures at least 2% oxygen exchange.
- Description should require sulfite-free product. Sulfite-treated fresh fruits and vegetables for raw consumption are considered adulterated under Section 402(a)(2)(c) of the U.S. Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Reject swollen bags; product that is discolored, slimy, or wet.
- Check code date for freshness.

Storing

- Store immediately in coldest part of refrigerator. Any break in the cold chain lowers quality and storage time.
- Keep bag sealed until ready to use. Handle carefully to maintain air-tight seal and to maximize storage time.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

SPINACH, FRESH: stemmed and washed; sulfite-free; packaged in gas permeable package; code dated; 12/10 oz.

Squash, Hard-Shell (Winter)*

WINTER

Grades:

U.S. No. 1
U.S. No. 2

Difference between grades are based primarily on external appearance.



Popular Varieties

- Acorn – Acorn-shaped with deep furrows.
- Banana – Large, cylindrical-shaped squash with pointed ends.
- Buttercup – Flat, round squash with turban-shaped top.
- Butternut – Large squash with an elongated, bell shape.
- Delicata – Cylindrical squash with longitudinal grooves, delicata is sweet and buttery.
- Golden Nugget Squash – Small, round, hard-shelled squash with an orange colored shell that has ridges.
- Hubbard – Large round squash with tapered ends.
- Kaboucha – Kaboucha are generally dark green with paler uneven stripes.
- Spaghetti – Large, oblong-shaped squash with yellow, semi-hard rind.
- Turban – Vivid orange rind striped with cream, green, or white, and a turban shape distinguishes these squashes.

How Packed

- 35- to 50-lb. bushel containers, cartons, and crates
- 20-lb. and 25-lb. bulk boxes
- Bulk bins

In Season

Available year-round

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Squash should be heavy, with hard rind, dull color typical of variety.
- Reject lightweight, shiny, or soft squash.

Storing

- Store at 60-65°F/16-18°C, 85-95% relative humidity.
- Keep away from ethylene producing fruits and ripening rooms
- Ensure space is well ventilated

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.4030 through 51.4035

Sample Description

SQUASH, WINTER ACORN, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard, 20-lb. box



Squash, Soft Shell (Summer)*

(SUMMER)



Popular Varieties

- Crookneck – Cylindrical shape with bulb end, creamy yellow rind, white flesh and seeds.
- Opo squash – A long, thin, light green soft-shell squash that originates from tropical Southeast Asia.
- Pattypan – Round, squat shape with scalloped edges.
- Scallopini – A cross between pattypan and zucchini, it is shaped like a top with emerald green skin.
- Straightneck – Cylindrical shape, creamy yellow rind, white flesh and seeds.
- Zucchini – Cylindrical shape, dark green shiny rind with some light speckling, white flesh, and seeds.

How Packed

10- to 42-lb bushel containers, crates, and lugs.

In Season

Available year-round

Receiving

- Inspect for quality. Summer squash should be firm with shiny, tender rinds, color typical of variety and free of injury.
- Reject pitted, dull, or spotted squash.

Storing

- Store at 45-50°F/7-10°C, 85-95% relative humidity
- Store in a well-ventilated area
- Keep away from ethylene producing fruits and ripening rooms.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.4050 through 51.4062

Sample Description

SQUASH, SOFT-SHELL (SUMMER), CROOKNECK, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; small; 22-lb. carton.

Sizes:

Crookneck/Straightneck/Zucchini

Small
Medium
Large

Pattypan:

Small
Medium
Large
Jumbo

Grades:

U.S. No.1
U.S. No. 2

Note: not all soft-shell squash is graded. Ungraded soft-shell squash is called "unclassified."

Differences between grades are based primarily on external appearance.

Succotash

CANNED

Forms

Corn and lima beans
Corn and snap beans
Corn, lima beans, and tomatoes
Corn, snap beans, and tomatoes

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Grade D or Substandard

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Recommended fill of container 90% of total volume; minimum drained weight not established in federal regulations.
- May be packed with added water, with or without added sugar or salt.
- Specify vegetable mix (example: corn and lima beans) and corn form: whole-kernel or cream style.
- Specify lima bean form: fresh, frozen, or dry soaked.

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.6002

Sample Description

SUCCOTASH, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; mixture: creamed corn and frozen lima beans; 90% fill of container; 6/10.

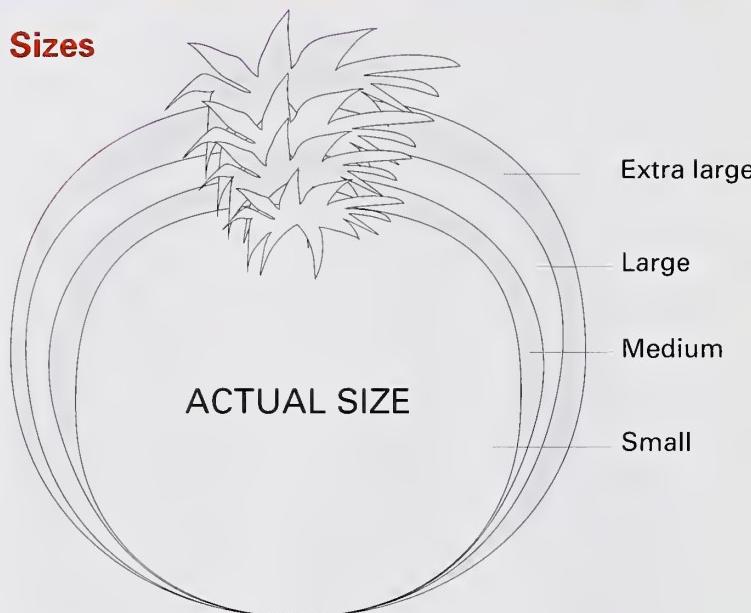
Sample Description

SUCCOTASH, CANNED: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; mixture: whole kernel corn, snap beans, and tomatoes; 90% fill of container; 6/10.

Tomatoes

FRESH

Sizes



Grades

U.S. No. 1
U.S. Combination
U.S. No. 2
U.S. No. 3

Popular Varieties

Florida	California
Agriset	Merced
Bonita	Olympic Sunbrite
Solar Set	Shady Lady
Sunny	Sunbolt

Types (not varieties)

Cherry: Small, round; for salad and garnish
Round: Available in different sizes; an all-purpose tomato
Roma: oblong shaped; an all-purpose tomato

How Packed

Round: 25 lb bulk
18-lb to 20-lb flat or carton (2 layered)
30-lb flat or carton (3 layered)

Cherry: 12 one pint baskets per flat
Roma: 25-lb bulk containers

In Season

Available year-round

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Tomatoes

FRESH (CONTINUED)

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 51.1855 to 51.1858

Purchasing Tips

- Tomatoes that are not USDA graded may use old sizing standard, shown in following comparison:

Old size*	New size	Minimum diameter
7 x 7	Small	2 ¹ / ₈ "
6 x 7	Medium	2 ¹ / ₄ "
6 x 6	Large	2 ¹ / ₂ "
5 x 6	Extra large	2 ³ / ₄ "

*Refers to number of rows in a tray and number of tomatoes in the row.

- When ordering by old size, specify weight of flat, 20 to 21 lb. If flat is USDA inspected/graded, tomato size will be stamped on carton. Florida does not ship small tomatoes.
- Tomatoes may be ordered by stage of ripeness desired:

Stage 1, green: Surface completely green

Stage 2, breaker: Green to tannish yellow, pink or red on 10% or less of surface

Stage 3, turning: 10% to 30% of surface is tannish yellow, pink or red

Stage 4, pink: 30% to 60% of surface is pink or red

Stage 5, light red: 60% to 90% of surface is pink or red

Stage 6, red: More than 90% of surface is red

- "Vine ripe" tomatoes are picked at Stages 2, 3, and 4.

- Tomatoes have best flavor when fully ripe.

Receiving

Inspect for bright shiny skin in all stages of ripeness, firm flesh, size and color as ordered.

Storing

- Store at room temperature away from sunlight and in area with good air circulation.
- Use ripe tomatoes within 3 days.
- Store unripe tomatoes away from sunlight. Light pink tomatoes (Stage 4) ripen in 3 to 5 days.
- Store tomatoes stem side up.
- Handle carefully to avoid bruising.
- Authorities differ on refrigeration. Some say refrigeration causes loss of flavor; others say refrigerate when ripe.

Sample Description

TOMATOES, FRESH: to be packed to U.S. No. 1 Grade standard; ripeness stage 5; large or 6 x 6; 18 to 20 lb.



Green



Breaker



Turning



Pink



Light Red



Red

Photos courtesy of Florida Tomato Committee (not for Reprint)

Tomatoes



Forms

Whole
Sliced
Wedged
Diced
Crushed
Stewed

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy
U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard
U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard
Substandard
(Do not apply to crushed or stewed)

How Packed

#10 cans, 6 per case

Purchasing Tips

- Tomatoes are packed as regular pack (packing medium is tomato juice), tomato puree, and tomato paste. Regular pack may be whole, sliced, or wedged.
- Minimum drained weight for all forms of U.S. Grade A and U.S. Grade B is 63.5 oz per can; for Grade C, 54.7 oz per can.
- Whole tomatoes may be solid pack (no added liquid).
- Tomatoes in all forms may be canned with or without peel.
- Grade B is recommended when appearance is not important; that is, when tomatoes are served in mixed dishes such as spaghetti.
- Diced tomatoes save labor and usually are less expensive than whole pack; may be packed in juice or puree.
- Crushed and stewed tomatoes have no standard of identity or grade standard; each product varies with the processor. Recommendations: Tomato soluble solids (TSS) 12% or greater; color, flavor, and odor equivalent to U.S. Grade A for canned tomato puree.

Standard of Identity Reference:

Title 21 CFR 155.190

Grade Standard Reference:

Title 7 CFR 52.5168

Sample Description

TOMATOES, CANNED, DICED: peeled; to be packed to U.S. Grade B standard; 6/10.

Sample Description

TOMATOES, CANNED, CRUSHED: peeled; TSS 12% or greater; color, flavor, odor to be equivalent to U.S. Grade A for tomato puree; 6/10.

Turnip Greens with Turnips

FROZEN

Grades

U.S. Grade A or U.S. Fancy

U.S. Grade B or U.S. Extra Standard

Substandard

(There is no Grade C standard.)

How Packed

3-lb packages, 12 per case



Purchasing Tips

Federal standard allows 50% to 80% greens and 20% to 50% roots. Food industry packs two combinations:

- 1) Turnip greens with 20% diced turnips
- 2) 66.7% turnip greens with 33.3% diced turnips

Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

Title 7 CFR 52.3735

Sample Description

TURNIP GREENS WITH TURNIPS, FROZEN: to be packed to U.S. Grade A standard; chopped turnip greens with diced turnips; 80/20 proportion; 12/3 lb.

* See leafy greens, frozen, for information on turnip greens without turnips.

Vegetable Blends

FROZEN

Grades

No U.S. Grades

How Packed

Size of pack varies with blend and packer.

Purchasing Tips

- No grade standards; each blend will vary in kind, percentage, and cut of vegetables used. Read labels for ingredients and predominance of each.
- Popular blends listed usually contain ingredients shown:

California blend: Cut broccoli, cauliflower florets, crinkle cut carrots

Normandy blend: Broccoli spears, crinkle cut carrots, cauliflower florets

Italian blend, also called 5 blend:

Zucchini squash, sliced carrots, cauliflower, Italian green beans, baby carrots.

Midwest blend: Carrots, cut green beans, whole kernel corn

Oriental blend: 40% French cut green beans, 35% cut broccoli, 20% onions, 5% sliced mushrooms.

Scandinavian blend, also called 5 blend:

Peas, sliced zucchini squash, julienne carrots, cut green beans, chopped onion.

Stew vegetables: Potatoes, carrots, celery, onion.

Stir fry blend: Broccoli spears, julienne green beans, sugar snap peas, celery, red peppers, water chestnuts, onion slices. (Some packers include only mushrooms, water chestnuts, and sweet red peppers.)

- To get the blend desired may require prior brand approval.



Standard of Identity Reference

None

Grade Standard Reference

None

Sample Description

VEGETABLE BLEND, FROZEN: California; mixture to contain cut broccoli, cauliflower florets, crinkle cut carrots; predominance to be order listed; 12/2 lb only.



Appendixes

APPENDIX 1:

LAWS, STANDARDS & REGULATIONS

The United States enjoys one of the safest food supplies in the world. The laws and regulations required to achieve that safe food supply are lengthy and complicated. A realistic goal is to understand the basic purpose of each law and know where to go for additional information when necessary.

The purposes of the food laws were stated in the 1977 edition of Food Purchasing Pointers for School Food Service, published by the Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Those purposes remain true today. In short, the laws are designed to:

- Ensure real food value.
- Maintain integrity of foods.
- Protect quality and quantity of all basic foods.
- Protect the health of the buyer.
- Promote honesty.
- Provide informative labeling.

Here is a brief review of the laws that accomplish these purposes:

The Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act

The Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act was passed in 1938. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for administering it. To contribute to the safety of our food supply, this law...

- Prohibits the shipment in interstate commerce of a misbranded food product.
- Considers a food mislabeled if it contains false or misleading statements.

- Prohibits shipment in interstate commerce of adulterated food products.
- Establishes definitions, standards of identity, standards of quality, and standards of fills for containers of food.

The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act

The Nutrition Labeling and Education Act (NLEA) of 1990 made several important changes in the Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act. The NLEA requires a nutrition facts label on most food products sold in grocery stores. Institutional foods were exempt from the labeling requirements, but many food manufacturers voluntarily include the nutrition facts label on products for school use. This voluntary labeling provides valuable information for school food authorities working to implement the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in menus. A copy of a sample nutrition facts label is shown in Appendix 2.

The Agriculture Marketing Act

The Agriculture Marketing Act authorizes USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to provide a voluntary inspection and grading service for fruits and vegetables. This service has proved to be extremely valuable for purchasers of processed fruits and vegetables.

Most processed fruits and vegetables that schools purchase are not graded by USDA, but processors base their packing on USDA grade standards.

One of the many excellent references on private label quality designations is the National Food Service Management Institute's *First Choice, A Purchasing Systems Manual for School Food Service*.

APPENDIX 2:

NUTRITION LABEL

Nutrients are per serving size. The size is the amount of food customarily consumed, given in both household and metric measurements.

Labels show calories from fat here.

Daily Values show how this food fits into the overall daily diet. The percentage of any of the 14 nutrients the food may contain is compared to the daily recommended intake for the average person.

The list includes nutrients important to health, including these that we want to limit –

– as well most of these (except for sugars) we want in recommended amounts.

All ingredients must be listed on the label in descending order of predominance by weight. The list of ingredients tells what goes into the product.

NUTRITION FACTS

Serving Size $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (114g)

Servings Per Container 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 260

Calories from Fat 120

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 13g	20%
Saturated Fat 5g	25%
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 66mg	28%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	11%
Dietary fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 4%	Vitamin C 2%
Calcium 15%	Iron 4%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-Calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9

Carbohydrate 4

Protein 4

APPENDIX 3: REVIEW THE POTENTIAL DISTRIBUTOR VENDOR

Product line

1. Is this vendor a (circle the response): **full line specialty systems other?**
2. What percentage of products required by the school are stocked? _____ %
3. If awarding business on all-or-nothing basis by groups, how much time after bid award will the vendor require to have the additional items in stock? _____

Physical facilities

1. Describe the receiving/loading area; can product be received/loaded in inclement weather without damage to packaging? Is this area refrigerated?

2. Describe the loading procedures; can trucks be loaded in inclement weather without damage to packaging; can deliveries be set and loaded in temperature appropriate space?

3. Cleanliness of floors? **acceptable unacceptable**

4. Storage of damaged product? **acceptable unacceptable**

5. Organization of product in slots? **acceptable unacceptable**

6. Cleanliness/orderliness of cold storage? **acceptable unacceptable**

7. Type of storage (circle those available): **dry refrigerated frozen**

If several different temperature ranges, record the temperatures: _____

8. Pest Control **acceptable unacceptable**

9. Describe storage of used pallets: _____

Delivery equipment

1. What type of equipment is used? (circle one):

dry only dry and frozen refrigerated only dry/frozen/refrigerated

APPENDIX 4:

IDEAL STORAGE TEMPERATURES

32° TO 40°

Apples	Corn	Parsley
Apricots	Cranberries	Parsnips
Artichokes	Garlic	Peaches
Asparagus	Grapes	Pears (Ripe)
Beets	Greens	Peas
Berries	Green Onions	Pineapple (Fresh-Cut)
Broccoli	Herbs (other than Basil &	Plums
Brussels Sprouts	Oregano)	Radishes
Cabbage	Iceberg Lettuce	Rhubarb
Cantaloupe	Kale	Rutabagas
Carambola	Kiwifruit	Spinach
Carrots	All Leaf Lettuce	Sprouts
Cauliflower	Mushrooms	Strawberries
Celery	Nectarines	Turnips
Cherries	Onions	Watercress
Coconuts	Oranges (Florida & Texas)	

40° TO 50°

Avocado (Ripe)	Jicama	Papaya
Basil (Fresh)	Lemons	Peppers
Beans	Mandarins	Pineapples
Cucumbers	Melons	Potatoes
Eggplant	Okra	Squash (Summer)
Ginger Root	Oranges (California)	Tomatoes (Ripe)*
Honeydews	Oregano (Fresh)	

Leave Out of Cold Room

Avocados (Unripe)	Mangos	Squash(Winter)
Bananas	Pears (Unripe)	Sweet Potatoes
Grapefruit	Plantains	Tomatoes (Green)
Limes	Pumpkins	Watermelons (Whole)
	Shallots	

Source: PMA Foodservice Produce Reference Manual, Postharvest Technology - University of California - 1992

*Will lose flavor at this temperature during prolonged storage.



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
FNS-365
February 2004





School Foodservice Professionals:

USDA's Team Nutrition salutes you for your hard work and dedication to students nationwide. We now ask your help in addressing an increasing national concern, obesity.

Eating should be a fun, enjoyable experience that gets kids to eat healthfully in the process. Kids are not eating the 5 to 9 fruits and vegetables a day recommended by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. At the same time, obesity and diet-related diseases among young children are increasing at an alarming rate. Team Nutrition believes that focusing special attention on encouraging children to eat more fruits and vegetables will help change these negative health trends.

Fruits and Vegetables Galore is a tool for school foodservice professionals packed with tips on planning, purchasing, protecting, preparing, presenting, and promoting fruits and vegetables. It was developed in cooperation with the National Cancer Institute's National 5 A Day Program, the Produce for Better Health Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American School Food Service Association, the National Restaurant Association, the American Cancer Society, the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, the Produce Marketing Association, and United Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Association.

Use *Fruits and Vegetables Galore* to help rejuvenate your cafeteria with colorful fruits and vegetables. Dress up your serving line to draw attention to fruits and vegetables to encourage children to make these selections. Solicit the cooperation of teachers by providing them with teaching tools or by supporting their educational efforts. Make your daily meal offerings competitive with other commercial options available to students. Use all these materials to get students excited about eating healthfully.

State Education Agencies and school food authorities (SFAs) are receiving copies of *Fruits and Vegetables Galore* automatically. SFAs should order copies of the publication for all their schools – one copy per school. Please use the order form on the reverse side of this page to place your order. Orders may be faxed or mailed using the fax number or address on the form.

Eat Your Colors Every Day!!!

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Team Nutrition, a nutrition education initiative brought to you by the United States Department of Agriculture's Team Nutrition and your child's school. The goal of Team Nutrition is simple—improve the health of children by encouraging them to eat healthy and be physically active. The four Team Nutrition messages are:

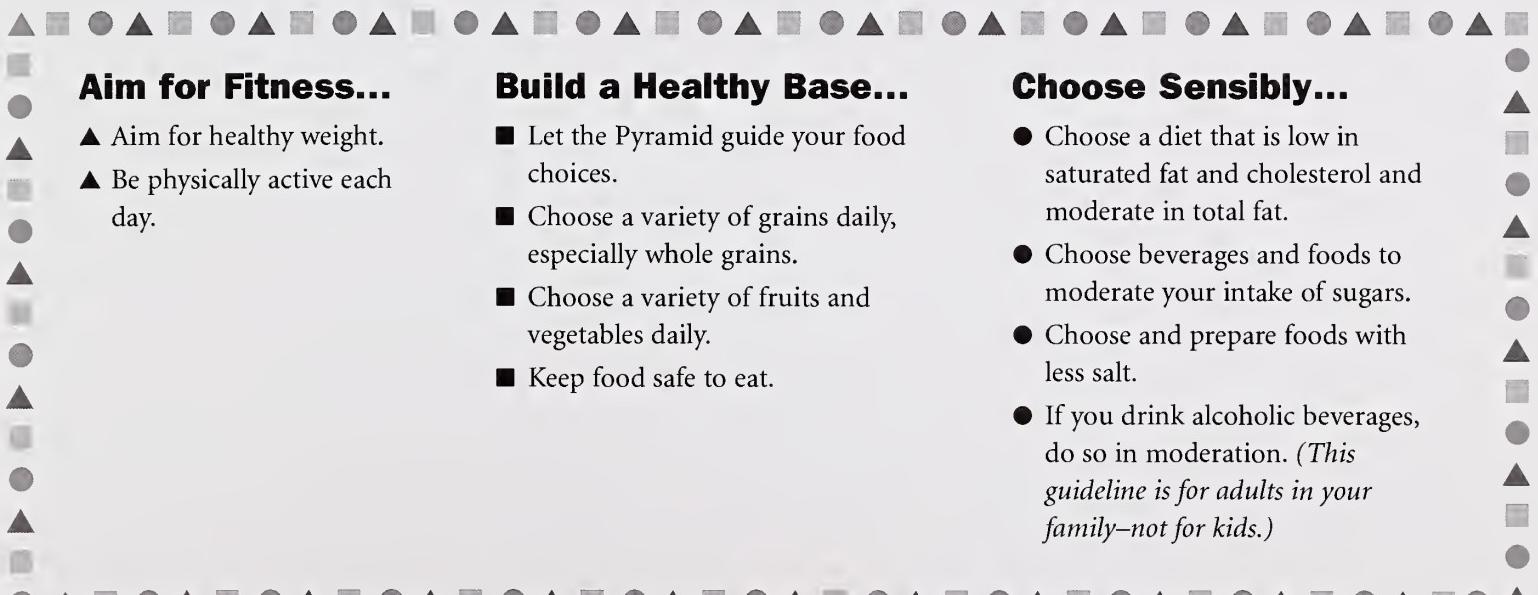
- Eat a variety of foods
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and grains
- Eat lower fat foods more often
- Be physically active

You are your child's most important role model, and your help is needed for this initiative to succeed. Therefore, we have created parent pages, full of fun and informative activities you and your child can do together.

Healthful eating is important to you. After all, you want your family to have energy, be healthy, and stay well. You want your child to grow properly. You control family food choices more than you think.

GUIDELINES...FOR YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH!

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans can be your family's guide to smart eating and active living. This advice is meant for anyone in your family, ages two and over.

- 
- Aim for Fitness...**
 - ▲ Aim for healthy weight.
 - ▲ Be physically active each day.
 - Build a Healthy Base...**
 - Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
 - Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
 - Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
 - Keep food safe to eat.
 - Choose Sensibly...**
 - Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
 - Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
 - Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
 - If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation. (*This guideline is for adults in your family—not for kids.*)

Unfortunately, most children do not eat healthy and are not physically active according to the Dietary Guidelines listed above. Less than one in five children eats the recommended servings of fruit and vegetables daily. Team Nutrition needs you to join in and help kids eat healthy and get physically active.

This is the first of eight parent pages your child's teacher will photocopy and ask your child to bring home to you. Each page deals with a different aspect of nutrition, and is related to what your child learned in school.

What Are Children Eating Today?

- 35% of elementary school-age children eat no fruit, and 20% eat no vegetables on a given day.
- 27% of children 6-11 years old are considered obese.
- 12% of school-age children reported skipping breakfast.



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
July 2002

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Enjoy

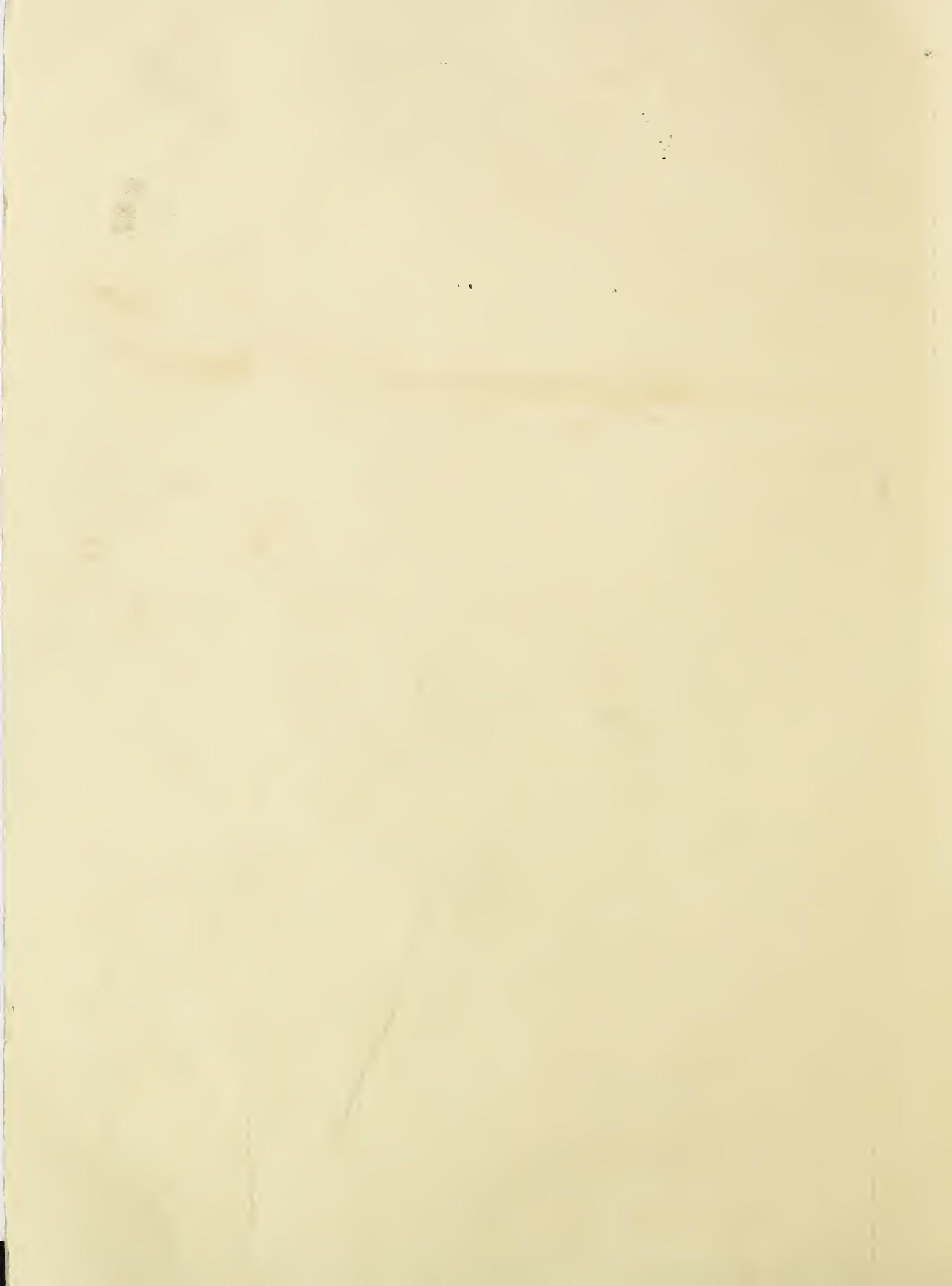
Fruits and Vegetables!



Eat more fruits and vegetables — an easy and delicious way to improve your health!

For more information on nutrition and health, call the American Cancer Society toll free
1-800-ACS-2345 or visit us on the web www.cancer.org.







Fruit & Vegetable Challenge



www.fns.usda.gov/tn



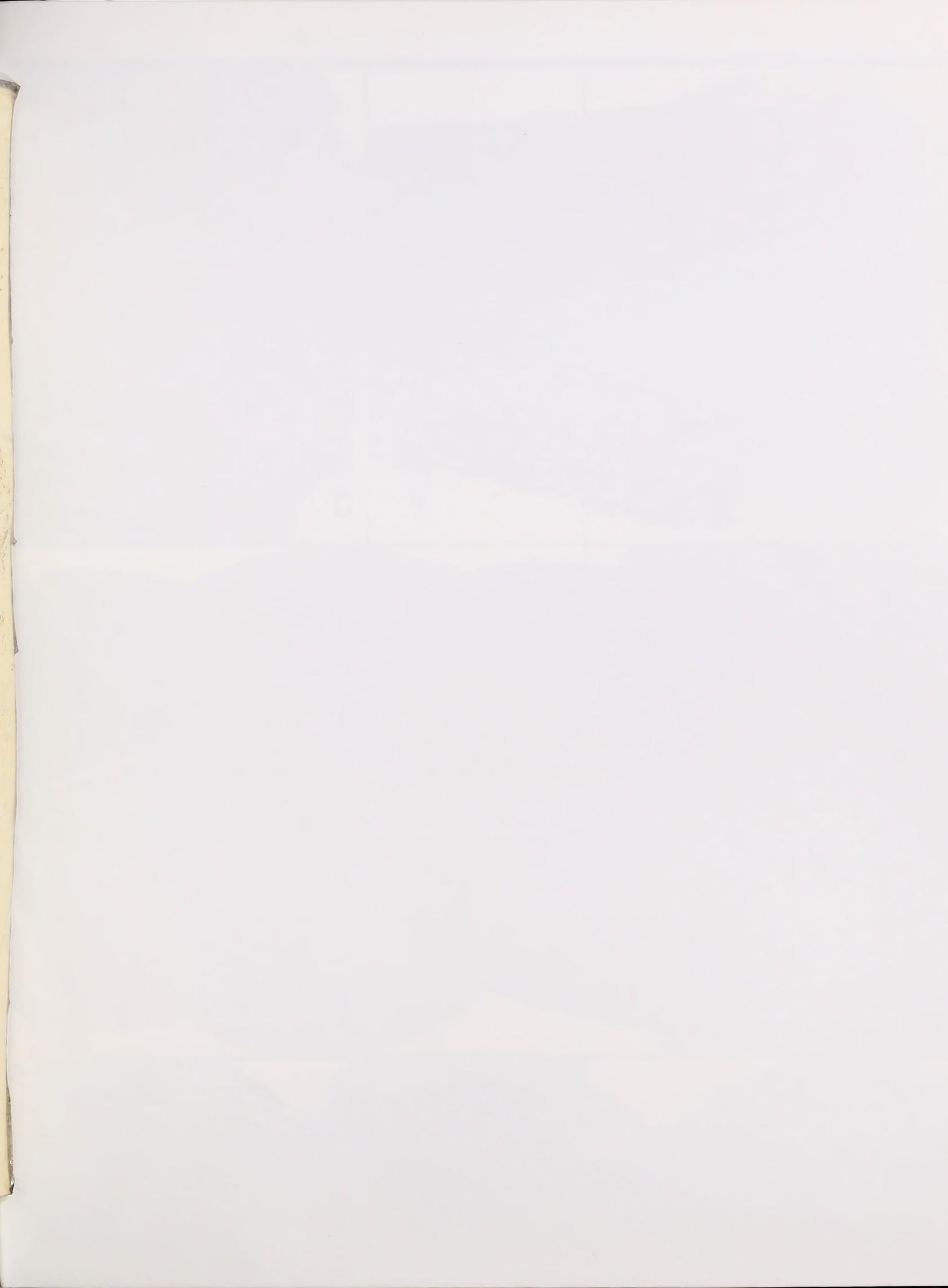
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Eat Your Colors Today!



United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

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Sense-ational Food

Taste it

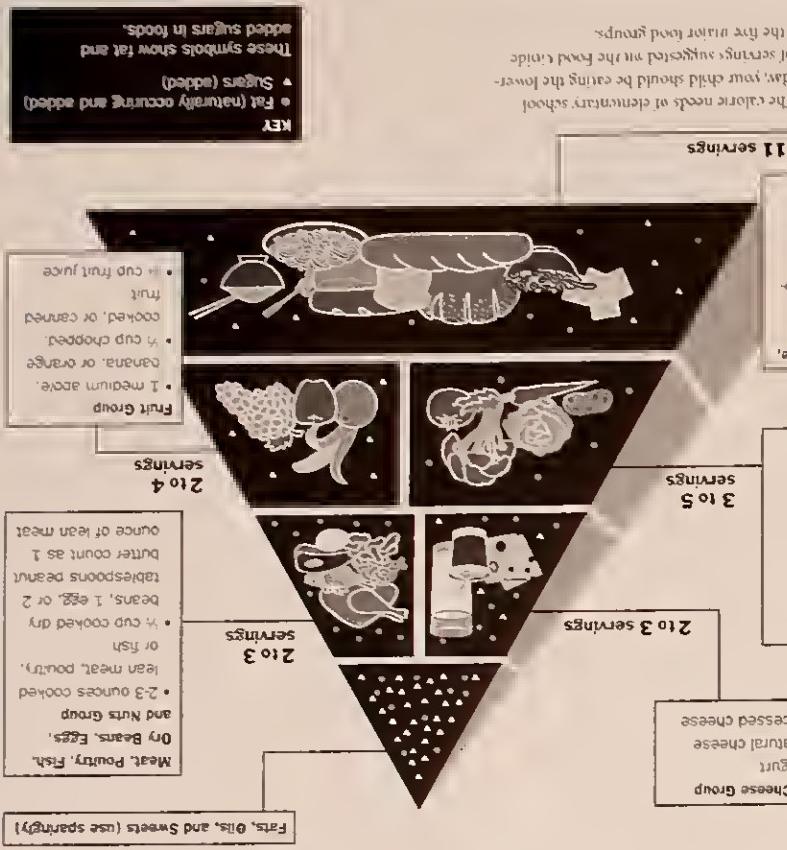
See it

Feel it

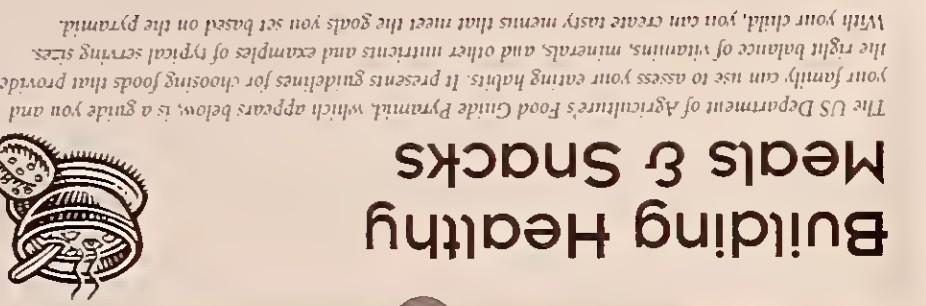
Smell it

Hear it





FOOD GUIDE PYRAMID: A Guide to Daily Food Choices



Supermarket Sleuths

Children are more willing to try new foods when they help to select them. Therefore, a trip to the supermarket is an excellent opportunity to expand the variety of foods your child is willing to eat, as well as an opportunity to learn more about making food choices for healthy eating.

To make the activity ideas below even more appealing to your child, you can both play detectives who use clues from the Food Guide Pyramid (Parent Reproducible 3) to choose foods at the supermarket.



PLAN OF ACTION

Create a Shopping List Before you take off on your shopping expedition, write out a shopping list together. This reinforces what your child is learning about different kinds of foods and how foods are grouped. First, write down all the "suspects" or items you will be looking for at the store. As you prepare this list, ask your child what she or he thinks the family needs. Then, challenge your child to organize the "suspects" by food group. Have him/her begin by writing all the grains (breads, cereals, rice, and pasta) you need, then listing the fruits, vegetables, dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt, etc.), and finally all the meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, and nuts. Include a special "snacks" section on your list, where you can list healthy snack alternatives.

Take Your Shopping Cart Around the World Browsing through a supermarket can help your child discover the wonderful variety of foods that are grown or produced throughout the world. Together, you and your child can plan to introduce the rest of the family to foods from other cultures. Before you go shopping, set goals to try new foods from other countries. Make a list of countries, and choose one dish from each. Write out the ingredients you will need to prepare these foods. This list can be used as a checklist each time you go shopping. When you are at the store, challenge your child to locate these items. When your family is eating this new dish, let your child announce what country it comes from.

Get Those Groups When you get to the store, ask your child to look for foods by food groups. Turn the shopping list over to him/her and suggest that he/she checks off each item as it goes into your cart.



Wanted! New Foods Pick a food group and ask your child to choose one or two new foods from this group for the family to try. It could be a new kind of fruit, a vegetable your child hasn't tried before, a new flavor of cheese, a type of dry bean you can use for soup or salad, an interesting shaped pasta, or a different kind of bread. You can decide on these new foods at home or wait to see what you find at the store. Have your child select a new item from a different food group on your next trip to the market together.



FAMILY FOOD INVESTIGATION Encourage your child to explore his/her food heritage. Suggest that he/she interview older family members about the foods they ate as children or their favorite foods now. Using all the information your child collects, you can make a family food tree that illustrates these special family foods. Discuss family recipes and make a shopping list for one of these recipes. Have your child track down the ingredients when you arrive at the store.

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- Eat a variety of foods
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and grains
- Eat lower fat foods more often
- Be physically active

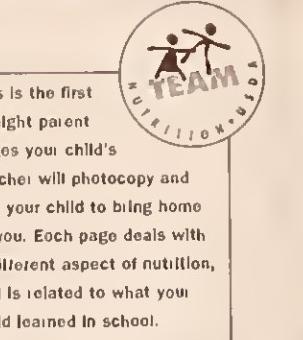
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GUIDELINES...FOR YOUR FAMILY'S HEALTH!

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans can be your family's guide to smart eating and active living. This advice is meant for anyone in your family, ages two and over.

- Aim for Fitness...
 - ▲ Aim for healthy weight.
 - ▲ Be physically active each day.
- Build a Healthy Base...
 - ▲ Let the Pyramid guide your food choices.
 - ▲ Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.
 - ▲ Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.
 - ▲ Keep food safe to eat.
- Choose Sensibly...
 - Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.
 - Choose beverages and foods to moderate your intake of sugars.
 - Choose and prepare foods with less salt.
 - If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation. (This guideline is for adults in your family—not for kids.)



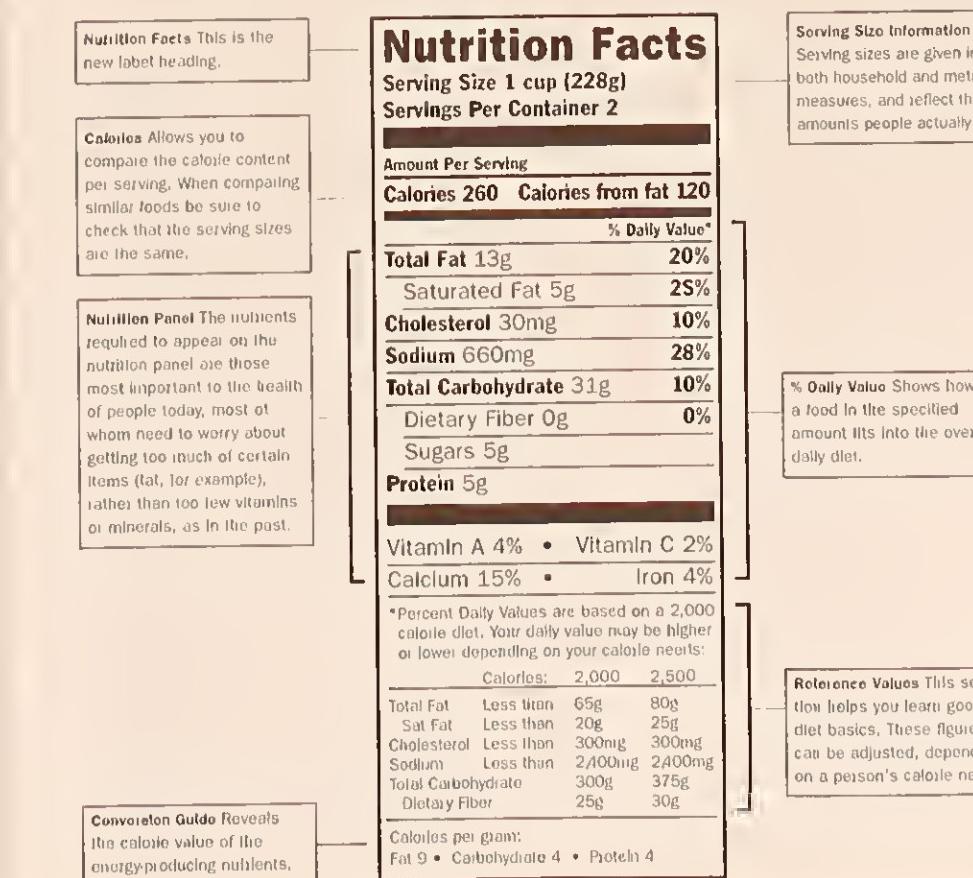
Nutrition Facts This is the new label heading.
Calories Allows you to compare the calorie content per serving. When comparing similar foods be sure to check that the serving sizes are the same.

Nutrition Panel The nutrients required to appear on the nutrition panel are those most important to the health of people today, most of whom need to worry about getting too much of certain items (fat, for example), rather than too few vitamins or minerals, as in the past.

Conversion Guide Reveals the calorie value of the energy-producing nutrients.
Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Understanding The New Nutrition Facts Label

The new Nutrition Facts label makes it easier for people to know what is in the food they eat. Comparing these labels will help you to know which foods have lower fat or fewer calories, which foods make healthy snacks, and which are acceptable for special diets. As a parent, use the new label to make informed food choices that will benefit your entire family.



Pyramid Snacks

Snacks are an important way to help children fill the hunger gap between regular meals. Make snacks count toward food group servings to ensure meeting the Pyramid recommendations. Plan for snacks, as mini-meals, to get a variety of different foods. Here are some ideas for snacks that you and your child can try out together:

SNACK MIX

Are you always on the go? Do you participate in active sports like hiking or biking? If so, then this mix is an ideal snack for you. It has only half the fat of a one-fourth cup serving of salted peanuts and 144 milligrams less sodium.

- Pretzels, unsalted 1 cup
- Roasted peanuts, unsalted 1 cup
- Raisins 1 cup
- Sunflower seeds, unsalted ½ cup

SERVINGS: about 1 cup
Per tablespoon:
Calories 15
Total fat 1 gram
1. Mix ingredients together.
2. Store in an airtight container.



SALSA

A fat-free, low-sodium vegetable dip that provides vitamin C and vitamin A too.

- 8-ounce can "no-salt-added" tomato sauce
- 1 tablespoon chili peppers, canned, drained, finely chopped
- ¼ cup green pepper, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon oregano leaves, crushed
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin

SERVINGS: about 1 cup
Per tablespoon:
Calories 5
Total fat 1 gram
1. Mix all ingredients thoroughly.
2. Chill before serving to blend flavors.
3. Serve with toasted pita bread, breadsticks, or raw vegetable pieces.



OTHER SNACK IDEAS

- Juicy: fruits
- Crispy: pumpkin seeds, cracker sticks, cucumber strips, toast, cereal mixed with nuts
- For warmth: soups, cider, or herbal tea
- For thirst: vegetable juices, or fruit and yogurt shakes

• **Added Sugars** (added)
• **Fats** (naturally occurring and added)
• **Added Salt** (salt added to taste)

■ Remember that plants in containers depend on you for water, light, and food (fertilizer). Keep this in mind when deciding what to plant.

■ Remember that plants in containers depend on you for water, light, and food (fertilizer). Keep this in mind when deciding what to plant.

■ Check the seed packet for the amount of sun the plant needs to grow well.

■ Watering: Water lightly with a fine mist. The soil should be moist but not soggy.

■ Dig holes for the seeds. Check the seed packet to see how deep to dig. Sow the seeds evenly and moisten with water to keep them from drying out.

■ Cover the drainage hole in the bottom of the pot with soil.

■ Water daily. This keeps the soil from drying out.

■ Take a stalk of celery (or a carrot) and cut off 1 inch from the bottom end.

■ Place the stalk in a jar of water. Add food coloring to the water (blue or red are best) until the water becomes dark.

■ Let the stalk sit in the water for 24 hours.

■ With your child, look at the stalk the next day.

■ Discuss the color at the leaves at the top of the stalk. Scrub the surface of the celery stalk with a knife—do you see the colored veins? Discuss their role in "feeding" the plant. Cut the stalk in half and discuss what you see. Challenge your child to explain how the water reaches all the parts of the plant.

■ Roots: carrots, turnips, beets, radishes.

■ Leaves: spinach, cabbage, kale, and all kinds of lettuce.

■ Fruits: apples, peaches, plums, and mangos.

■ Flowers: broccoli and cauliflower.

■ Seeds: corn, peas, dry beans, oats, and nut.

As you locate these items at the store, discuss with your child how each looks like a leaf, a stem, and so on. For example:

■ Talk about how the root vegetables grow underground, just like the roots of plants at home or in the garden.

■ Look closely at the broccoli florets. Point out how each is a bud, like a flower waiting to open.

■ At home, you can open an orange and point out the seeds inside. Explain to your child that a fruit is any edible seed-bearing part of a plant.

You can take scavenger hunt walks together during every season. Winter, spring, summer, or fall, there's always something interesting that you and your child can discover. You can adapt your checklist of items appropriately.

For example:

- Look for human and animal tracks in the snow
- Search for signs of spring in new flowers and buds on trees
- Find interesting shadows on a sunny summer day
- Gather colorful leaves and acorns on a crisp autumn afternoon

Get Energized!

Recent studies report that many children are not physically active on a regular basis. Encourage your child to become involved in sports activities available at school or in the community. At home, you can try some of the activities suggested below to help your child be more active, and to reinforce the link between the foods you eat, exercise, and good health.

INDOOR EXERCISE ACTIVITIES

Physical activity doesn't have to mean running, biking, or swimming. If the weather keeps you inside you can still keep fit.

- **Have a Dance Party** Dancing is a fun way to exercise and something fun that you and your child can do every day. Encourage your child to invent a dance to go along with a favorite song. Give your child the opportunity to be the teacher and instruct you in their new dance. Later, you can introduce your child to the dances you enjoy most, along with your own favorite songs.

■ **Household Exercise Olympics** Many household jobs help to build strong bodies. Create your own Household Exercise Olympics. Together, you and your child can try the following "events":

- Raking leaves
- Shoveling snow
- Weeding the garden
- Dusting all furniture or washing all windows in a designated room

Try doing these activities in tandem. Afterwards, tally up the "medal" winners in each event and announce the top Olympian in your family at dinner that night.

RELATED READING

After exercising, you and your child might want to settle down and read a book together—try *Bread, Bread, Bread*, by Anna Morris (1989, Scholastic). Filled with lots of photos, it tells the story of the variety of high-energy grain-based breads found all over the world.

Roots, Stems, Leaves, Fruits, Flowers, & Seeds

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Eat your colors every day.



For 5 A Day materials, call 888-391-2100 or visit www.shop5aday.com.

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Keep your Eyes on the Prize

Healthy Children





Keep Your Eyes on the Prize

Healthy Children



We've all seen the headlines:
Childhood overweight and obesity are increasing, and the status of our children's health is declining.

Since 1946, you—school foodservice professionals across the country—and we at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) have been partners in running the school meal programs for America's children. Recently, through USDA's Team Nutrition, we have combined our skills and resources to improve the nutritional quality of school meals and motivate children to choose the healthier options. Now, together, we must focus more specifically on helping our students prevent overweight and obesity and improve their health.

One excellent way to boost the nutritive value, taste, and eye appeal of school meals is to serve more fruits and vegetables in a variety of creative and appetizing ways. They can be real "show stoppers" on a salad bar or on the plate—with their dazzling array of colors, sizes, and shapes and their variety of taste sensations. Offering your students a fruit and salad bar is a great way to start. Children love to participate in selecting their meals and are more likely to try new items if they can see and choose them. Children who avoid cooked vegetables are often enthusiastic about fresh fruits and veggies.



This three-booklet Team Nutrition technical assistance tool is packed with tips to help you purchase, protect, prepare, present, and promote fruits and vegetables—and capture the interest of your students.

Meal Appeal: Attracting Customers, the centerpiece of the tool, includes guidance and great ideas for presenting and promoting fruits and vegetables for your special customers.

Quality Food for Quality Meals: Buying Fruits and Vegetables offers technical information to help you purchase high quality fruits and vegetables, store them properly, and keep them safe and wholesome—to ensure their “star” quality for the serving line.



Tricks of the Trade: Preparing Fruits and Vegetables details each aspect of operating a salad bar and making it the perfect showcase for your colorful, mouth-watering array of delicious, nutritious fresh fruits and vegetables. It also includes guidance on preparing and serving prepackaged salads as well as cooked, frozen, and canned vegetables. In addition, it provides information on food safety and kitchen and staffing requirements.

The tool offers lots of detailed information. Choose the information that is useful right now in your school and community. Some of you are just getting a fruit and vegetable effort underway; others already have sophisticated operations. Look at your current program. Take advantage of what you are already doing well, and build on your successes. Small changes can make a big difference.



Start with a plan.

Once you've decided that increasing the use of fruits and vegetables in your meal program is doable and should be a priority, you'll need a plan that outlines the steps for translating your commitment into action. You can think about the steps as 5 P's: purchasing, protecting, preparing, presenting, and promoting. These steps are interrelated and all are necessary. Only high quality, wholesome fruits and vegetables prepared carefully and presented attractively will entice students to select and eat them.

The three booklets in this tool cover all the steps you need to take. You can refer to them for help with both creating your plan and putting it into action.





Get buy-in.

An important component of planning is to talk to the people whose support you'll need—your district manager, your principal, and your students. Discuss the rise in childhood obesity and the decline in children's health—and the steps you're proposing to reverse the trend. Creating a focus group of students will give you not only a thumbs-up or thumbs-down on your ideas, but also as many suggestions as you can handle.

Take the lead.

By taking the lead in offering more fruits and vegetables to help address a national public health problem, you can win the respect of school administrators, concerned parents, and teachers. You can also spotlight the benefits of the updated and improved school meal programs and gain community support.

We hope this tool will help in the effort to prevent overweight and obesity. **Every step we take brings us closer to the real prize—healthy children.**

USDA's Partners in Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Many other organizations are working with USDA and the schools to achieve these critical goals—preventing overweight and obesity and improving children's health.

- The National 5 A Day Partnership, an alliance of Federal agencies, private industry, and health organizations that have joined forces to help all Americans meet the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Members of the partnership are the American Cancer Society, Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity, Association of State and Territorial Directors of Health Promotion and Public Health Education, National Cancer Institute, Produce for Better Health Foundation, Produce Marketing Association, United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association and the United States Department of Agriculture.

- The partnership guides the 5 A Day for Better Health Program—the Nation's largest public-private nutrition education initiative with 5 A Day

coordinators in each State and territory, and the military. Its goal is to increase fruit and vegetable consumption to 5 A Day for 75 percent of Americans by 2010. You can visit the 5 A Day Web site at www.5aday.gov.

- The partnership identified the need for a publication to help schools in their effort to increase students' consumption of fruits and vegetables. USDA then developed and published this tool.

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Schools: Send us Your Success Stories

Thanks also to all the other schools that shared their fruit and vegetable success stories and photographs with us for this publication. We know that schools across the country have similar success stories to share. We would like to include them on our Web site.

Please send your current success stories or tell us about your new fruit and vegetable efforts, with any photographs, to teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov.



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www.fns.usda.gov/tn

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Meal Appeal

Attracting Customers





www.fns.usda.gov/tn

Source documents for Meal Appeal include:

Fresh-2-U The Florida Way, Florida Departments of Education and Agriculture

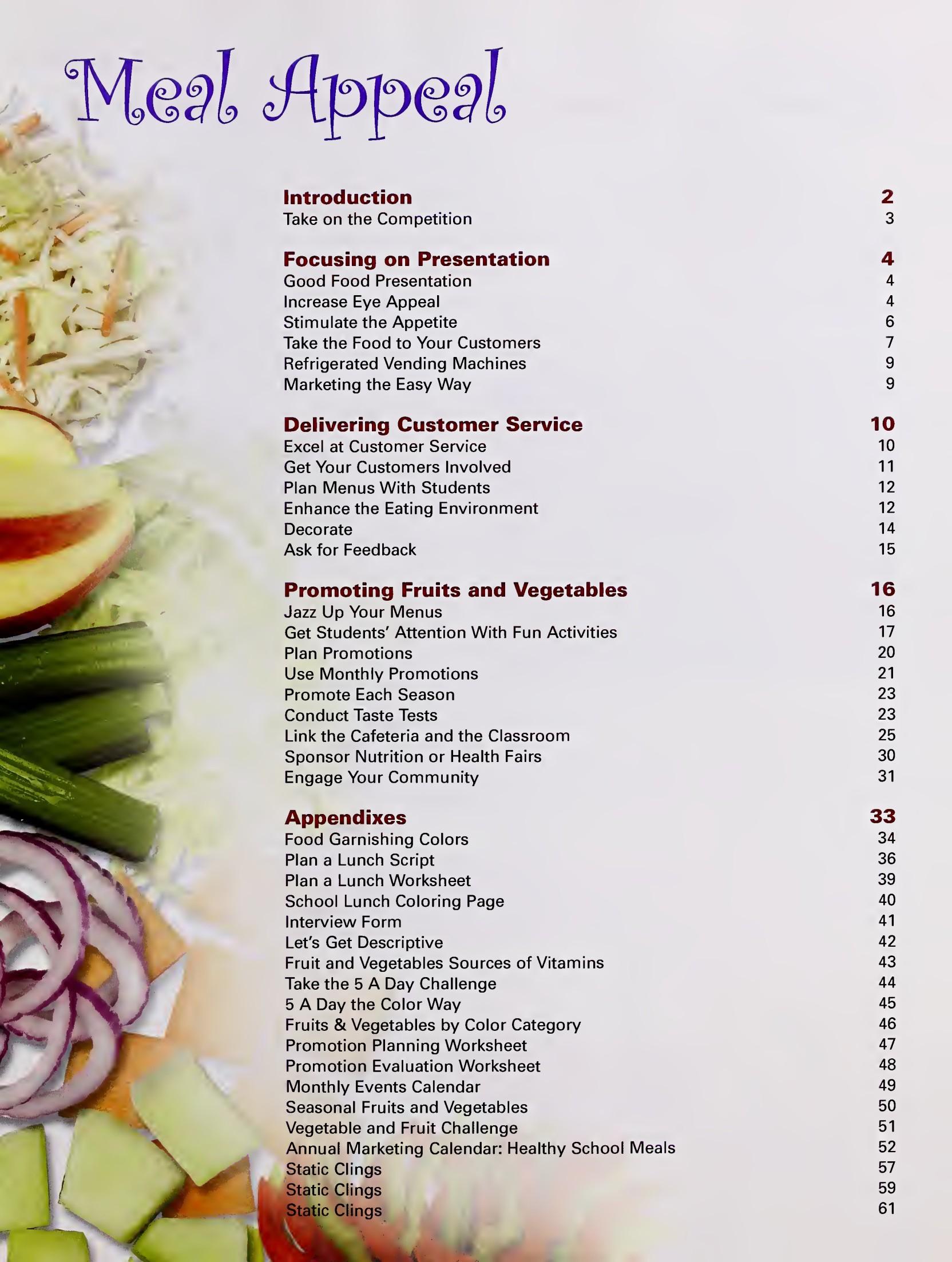
Five Star Food Presentation: Merchandizing School Meals, Maryland State Department of Education, Nutrition and Transportation Services Branch, Stewart Eidell, Nutrition and Education Training Specialist

Strategies for Success, California SHAPE, 1995, California Department of Education

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Introduction



You work hard to plan and prepare high quality meals, and you have a good product to sell. Now you just have to entice your students to eat the nutritious meals you're serving! Students are a tough audience, so you have to be especially creative in promoting school meals. This tool can help.

You'll find information in this booklet on

- Presenting foods
- Providing customer service
- Promoting school meals with special emphasis on fruits and vegetables.



You can refer to the other two booklets in the tool for information on purchasing fruits and vegetables (*Quality Food for Quality Meals*) and on preparing and presenting them—for salad bars, salads-to-go, and salad shakers (*Tricks of the Trade: Preparing Fruits and Vegetables*). The focus of all three booklets is on offering more fruits and vegetables and encouraging students to choose them—to combat overweight and obesity and to improve their health. For additional information and ideas, see Team Nutrition's *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*.



Take on the Competition

You can boost your chances for success by offering foods and creating promotions similar to the ones your students see in the restaurants they like. This means you have to study the competition. Ask students where they eat and why. Explore the places they name. Then assess how your foodservice stacks up.

When you visit the competition, ask yourself:

- What attracts the students?
- What features do these places have in common?
- Are students eating in these restaurants or just meeting there?
- What kinds of signage and marketing do these restaurants use?
- How do the employees interact with the students?
- Are students choosing foods that are not currently offered in the cafeteria?
- Are fruits and vegetables offered? If so, how are they presented?

Then evaluate the school cafeteria—as students may see it:

- Is the cafeteria a comfortable place to hang out?
- Is the food appealing? How does the food look?
 - Are there pleasant food aromas?
 - What is the first thing a student sees in the serving line?
 - Does staff place food on the plate/tray to look attractive?
 - Do garnishes complement the flavor, color, and texture of the foods?
 - Where are fruits and vegetables presented on the line? How are they offered? Do they look fresh and appealing?
 - Would you like to eat here?
- Evaluate your customer service.
 - Does the staff interact positively with the students?
 - Does the staff encourage students to try fruits and vegetables?
- Evaluate your food quality.
 - Does the foodservice staff taste the meals they serve?
 - Would foodservice staff choose to eat this food?
 - Is the quality of the food consistent from day to day?
- Evaluate your facilities.
 - Are facilities and equipment clean and without clutter?

Once you have answered these questions, you can think about how to improve your program and meet the competition head-on. You can decide how to accentuate the positives of your in-house restaurant, the school cafeteria.

Before undertaking major changes, speak with school or district representatives to make sure you are complying with district, State, and Federal regulations. You



You can boost your chances for success by offering foods and creating promotions similar to the ones your students see in the restaurants they like.

Focusing on Presentation

We eat with our eyes—then our mouths.

If it looks good, we'll taste it. If it tastes good, we'll eat it.

will also need the support of your principal, teachers, and custodial staff. Once you have a green light, plan to convene a student advisory group to help you decide how to make the changes and then market and promote your meal service. Grab your customers' attention as soon as they enter the serving area. Presenting food creatively can turn a dull looking foodservice line into a bountiful marketplace of healthful and appetizing eating opportunities. Emphasize fruits and vegetables by making them the most attractive part of your meal.

Good Food Presentation

- Increases Eye Appeal
- Stimulates Appetite
- Takes Food to the Customers

Increase Eye Appeal

Light

- Consider under-counter or track lighting to enhance the appearance of foods.



Color

Use fruits and vegetables to paint an appetizing picture.

- Proper cooking is a must! It ensures bright, crisp colors.
 - For maximum color, batch-cook foods in small batches just before you serve them.
 - Avoid using poor quality ingredients, overcooking, holding foods longer than 20 minutes.



Properly cooked



Overcooked

Focusing on Presentation

- Make the most of the array of natural colors.
 - Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables that make your line colorful.
 - Contrast colors to catch students' attention.
 - Concentrate colors for maximum effect.



- Garnish the food. (See pages 34–35 in the Appendices for color ideas.)
 - Use ingredients in the recipe as a garnish.
 - Add cut fruit or vegetables to the top of a dish for color contrast.
 - Choose a garnish that is a different shade or color than the dish.

Use sliced red bell pepper rings or julienne carrots to garnish green beans.

Use cherry tomatoes to garnish salad greens.

- Plan the fruits and vegetables in your menus to include at least two colors.
 - A few fresh strawberries can add just the spark you need to enhance canned fruits or fresh salads.
 - Add a few spinach and romaine leaves to iceberg salad mix to enrich the color.



Add interest by combining natural shapes or creating new shapes.

Shapes

Add interest by combining natural shapes or creating new shapes.

- Vary the cuts in the food.
 - Carrots can be sticks, julienne, medallions, shredded (fine, medium, coarse), diced, angle cut slices, crinkle cut, whole, or baby carrots.
 - Combine shapes in a dish—green peas with carrot medallions.
- Vary shapes of food on the line.
 - Surprise customers with unexpected shapes—cut food into triangles instead of squares, diamonds instead of rectangles.
 - Use cookie cutters to add interest to ordinary foods.
- Cut sandwiches in squares, circles, or triangles. How many other ways can you cut a sandwich?

Simplicity

Simple, clean lines and shapes are most pleasing to the eye.

- Place garnish in the center, side edge, or corner(s) of the pan.
- Clean lines attract the eye and focus the attention.
- Line decorations should enhance the food—not compete with it.



Focusing on Presentation

Height

Height showcases food and gives a sense of abundance.

- Keep serving pans full, making it easy for customers to see the complete array of options.



Make food attractive by stimulating all five senses.

- Add height to meals with other ingredients. For example, adding shredded lettuce to a sub sandwich adds little cost but increases appeal to students.
- Choose containers that add height to the line.

Packaging

- Put salads in clear plastic clamshells, on Styrofoam plates covered with clear tops or clear wrap, or in 12-16 ounce clear soft plastic cups with clear domed lids without holes. This gives students a good look at the food and adds wonderful color to your serving line. To find packaging options, visit the Foodservice and Packaging Institute, Inc. Web site at www.fpi.org for a listing of manufacturers and products. Also, work with your distributors to identify the products they have available, and determine which ones work best for you.

Stimulate the Appetite

Make food attractive by stimulating all five senses. Let your students

- *See it:* beautifully presented food encourages customers to select and try it.
- *Smell it:* aroma enhances the attraction of food and increases the anticipation to taste it.
- *Taste it:* fresh, well-prepared food provides positive experiences physically and emotionally.
- *Feel it:* a variety of textures and temperatures enhances the enjoyment of the meal.
- *Hear it:* crisp, crunchy food is fun to eat.



Focusing on Presentation

Contrast textures in a dish.

- Toasted sesame seeds sprinkled on green beans



Weave texture through the menu.

- Crusty garlic bread, tender ravioli, and crunchy broccoli salad

Vary the temperatures of foods.

- Hot vegetable soup with a cool, crisp green salad, and crackers

Choose textures, colors, and flavors that complement each other. Combine foods that children like with new, less familiar foods. Make food fun by providing finger foods that add sensory stimulation and make sample tasting easy.



Use Specialty Bars for Fun

Use specialty bars to expand your cafeteria and make it a fun and ever-changing eating scene. Look for diagrams of salad bar setups and recipes for salads-to-go and salad shakers in the *Tricks of the Trade: Preparing Fruits and Vegetables* booklet.

Take the Food to Your Customers

Presentation includes not only creating eye appeal and stimulating the appetite; it also includes physically getting the food to the students—which can have a dramatic impact on participation. Many high schools have followed the lead of their competitors and have gone to the food-court-style operation and the use of satellite carts, kiosks, cafes, walk-up windows, and vending machines.

These alternatives are great options for speeding up the process and encouraging more students to eat school meals and healthier foods. The number of satisfied customers more than pays for the extra effort it takes to arrange for equipment and staffing. However, be sure to work with the school administrators and staff to avoid congestion and ensure the safety of the students.

Here are some tips:

- Position satellite carts or à la carte lines away from entranceways.
- Avoid areas where classes are still in session.
- Make sure meal lines don't cross.
- Keep serving lines from crossing the dish return line.
- Keep registers close to the food lines.
- Rope, chain, or mark off areas for students to form lines.
- Provide clear, large, attractive signs to designate each food line.
- Work with school administration to stagger class arrival times in the cafeteria.

**Choose textures,
colors, and flavors
that complement
each other.**



Focusing on Presentation



Consider establishing an outdoor or court-yard café.

Satellite Cart and Kiosk Ideas

Use carts and kiosks to feature fresh fruits and vegetables. Serve them in a clear clamshell and be sure to keep them cool.

Some tips:

- Have a cash box or register on the cart and offer the components of a reimbursable meal.
- Price reimbursable meals competitively with à la carte items.
- Staff the cart with two foodservice workers—one to handle food and one to handle cash.
- Place carts in an outside patio area to avoid congestion in the cafeteria.
- Place carts and kiosks where students gather during lunch, such as outdoor commons, band building, gym, or near parking areas. Interview students to determine the best locations.
- Cover as many areas of campus as possible with carts and kiosks to encourage students to eat on campus.

Walk-Up-Window Café

If budget and physical set-up allow, why not create an outdoor or indoor Walk-Up-Window Café?

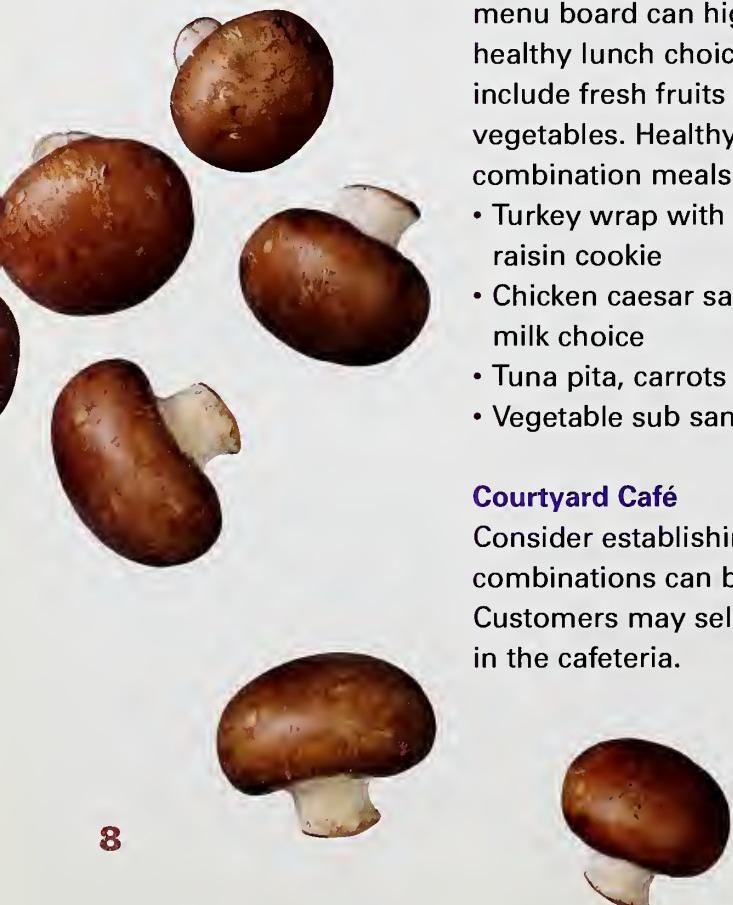
Customers can come to a pass-through window to the cafeteria and select prepackaged items. A menu board can highlight healthy lunch choices that include fresh fruits and vegetables. Healthy combination meals might include:

- Turkey wrap with lettuce and tomato, fruit cup, milk choice, oatmeal raisin cookie
- Chicken caesar salad shaker, whole-grain crackers, mixed fruit cup, milk choice
- Tuna pita, carrots and celery with lowfat dip, milk choice, melon balls
- Vegetable sub sandwich with cheese, minestrone soup, fresh fruit, milk choice



Courtyard Café

Consider establishing an outdoor or courtyard café. Similar healthy lunch combinations can be offered if refrigeration units or coolers are available. Customers may select prepackaged items and pay a cashier as they would in the cafeteria.



Focusing on Presentation

Refrigerated Vending Machines

Refrigerated vending machines allow school foodservice operations to sell fresher, healthier, and more appealing foods and to generate additional revenue. Promote nutritious foods such as:

Fresh fruits Fresh fruit cups Fresh vegetable cups with lowfat dip

Salads-to-go 100% fruit juice Cottage cheese and fruit cups Salad shakers

Wraps Sub sandwiches Baby vegetables (such as baby carrots) with dip

Fresh pineapple pushups Yogurt/fruit combos Pita sandwiches Celery

sticks with peanut butter

Make the fruit and vegetable selections the most attractive and bountiful part of the line.

Marketing—the Easy Way

Don't feel overwhelmed—simple changes can make a big difference. Here are a few quick tips:

- Fresh fruit can add color and interest to canned fruit. Put a cherry, red grapes, or sliced kiwifruit on top of fruit cocktail or canned pears to brighten them up.
 - Move fresh fruits and vegetables to the front of the serving line. By offering these selections first, students will select more instead of racing past them once they pick up their hot item.
 - Pre-portion cooked vegetables and place them so students can help themselves.
 - Display whole fruits in baskets near the register. Keep them fresh and appetizing. Add a sign advertising these choices.
 - Add the static clings (included in this guide) to the sneeze guard to remind students to select fruits and vegetables.
 - Make the fruit and vegetable selections the most attractive and bountiful part of the line.
 - Decorate with posters of beautiful fruits and vegetables to reinforce the idea that these are good choices.
 - Jazz up the names of the menu items and add signage to your serving line.
 - Display a sample meal, including salad and vegetable dish for students to see before entering the line to make their selections.
 - Offer tasting samples of new items as students enter the serving line, or pass them around the lunchroom while they are eating, so they can taste test the fruit or vegetable before it is offered on the line.
- Promote these as "free samples."



Delivering Customer Service

What Are Some Basic Customer Needs?

- To feel important
- To feel respected
- To feel welcome
- To be recognized
- To feel appreciated
- To get tasty, nutritious food
- To feel comfortable

Customers Are the Reason We Are Here!

- Customers are not dependent on us; we are dependent on them.
- Customers are not required to participate in the meal programs; they choose to participate.
- Customers are not an interruption to our work; they are the purpose for it.
- Customers are not to be argued with or challenged; we want their business.
- Customers provide us with our jobs; fewer customers can result in fewer foodservice positions.
- Customers are coming to us to have their needs met.

Excel at Customer Service

Nutritious school meals are a good deal! But that may not be enough to increase participation in school meal programs and get children to consume more fruits and vegetables. You need to take time to focus on the customer's needs if you want to meet and beat the competition. The staff on the serving line have opportunities every day to be friendly and to encourage students to eat fruits and vegetables.



Planning for excellent customer service is a step-by-step process:

- Decide what works best and what should be changed.
- Consider available resources.
- Set goals.
- Develop policies and procedures.
- Look to hire staff who are naturally inclined toward customer service.
- Train employees. Potential areas for training are:
 - Interacting with customers
 - Maintaining a helpful attitude toward co-workers and customers
 - Dressing appropriately
 - Being courteous and using good manners
 - Greeting and acknowledging customers
 - Communicating well—for example, speaking in full sentences
 - Using nonverbal communication that projects a willingness to help customers
 - Smiling and making eye contact

Delivering Customer Service

- Handling complaints and nonroutine situations
- Handling customers with special needs
- Understanding products, and menu and program requirements
- Practicing active listening
- Personal hygiene/cleanliness of work environment and serving area
- Food safety.
- Move customer-oriented staff to front-of-the-house positions and those less customer-oriented to back-of-the-house positions.
- Obtain feedback, monitor results, and revise procedures accordingly.

The National Food Service Management Institute has several materials you may find useful, especially *Go For the Gold With Customer Service*. Visit the Web site at www.nfsmi.org and find it listed in the Resource Guide.



Get Your Customers Involved

If you want to know what students will eat, *ask them*. Create a student advisory group, and be strategic in selecting students. Here are some recruiting possibilities:

- Student Council or Nutrition Advisory Council
- Representative from each grade level
- Multicultural Clubs to ensure diversity
- DECA (marketing organization), honor societies, other student clubs and organizations



**If you want to know
what students will
eat, *ask them*.**

- Students who are not currently eating school meals
- Class with the highest participation in breakfast and/or lunch
- Family Living Class, Gourmet Cooking Class, or other nutrition- or health-related classes
- PTA members and their children

Consider giving community service credit for participation in the student advisory group.

Delivering Customer Service

Providing serving options gives students choices and speeds up service, giving them more time to eat.

Be prepared to listen to your students' recommendations and follow through on their ideas. Then these students can be your cheerleaders—they can spread the word that you listened and made changes, and their enthusiasm can influence their friends to participate in the program.

Clinton City Schools in North Carolina involve students in grades 3-12 in monthly roundtables with the superintendent and school board. Over lunch, students raise issues of school policy and operation, and the quality of school meals is usually a discussion topic. School foodservice staff then take action to address the concerns. Some examples include adding chicken fajitas and steamed squash to the menu. The school system has seen a steady increase in participation.

Pinellas County, Florida, has developed Student Involvement Day. The Café Manager may work with a group of students, such as the student council or a single classroom, each month to develop the menu for that month's Student Involvement Day. After reviewing the nutritional requirements for a healthy meal, the manager or teacher works with a list of menu options to help the students create "their menu." The students learn about healthy eating and then get to enjoy seeing their menu ("Mrs. Smith's Class Menu," for example) on the day it is served. This is particularly effective with younger children.

Plan Menus with Students

Use the script and worksheet—adapted from California SHAPE, *Strategies for Success*—on page 36 to develop a reimbursable menu using a food-based menu planning system that students like and that meets the dietary guidelines and nutrition standards. Helping them understand the importance of choosing foods that help them feel good, grow strong, and do well in school will have long-term positive benefits.



Enhance the Eating Environment

Many factors affect a student's decision to participate in school meal programs. Time, location, accessibility, and image all play a part—in addition to menus, price, and food presentation. You can help create a positive eating environment by making sure that:

- Food is available at convenient and attractive locations. Salad bars and other serving options help create interest and excitement about trying new foods.



Delivering Customer Service

- Students feel safe and comfortable. This allows students to concentrate on eating their meal and enjoying the company of fellow students.
- The cafeteria atmosphere is appealing. Eating should be a pleasant experience. The more pleasant the surroundings, the greater the chance students will respond positively to the food choices you provide them.
- Students have enough time to eat. Providing serving options gives students choices and speeds up service, giving them more time to eat.



Look around the eating environment to see how it can be improved. One of the first questions to ask is, "Would I choose to eat here?" Remember, customers always have a choice, even if the only other option is to bring a meal from home. You have no opportunity to increase students' fruit and vegetable consumption and promote their good health if they are not eating school meals. Ask your students for suggestions.

Improving the cafeteria environment is more challenging in some of the older schools. Students can really be helpful in these situations. If you show that you are interested in making the cafeteria pleasant for them and if you listen to and carry out the suggestions they make, they will begin looking for ways to improve the cafeteria and meal programs.

Students at Kingsford High School and Middle School in the Breitung School District, Kingsford, Michigan, work with foodservice staff to make their cafeteria a welcoming, festive place. Television monitors (a big screen at the high school) allow students to watch the school's sporting events and the news channel. Oldies music also helps to keep an upbeat atmosphere. It's a place students can call their own. The high school has wallpaper border, matching valances on the windows, and pictures on the wall—all in a muted fruit pattern. At the middle school, the large windows provide a great view of the courtyard where students eat lunch at picnic tables.

Remember, customers always have a choice, even if the only other option is to bring a meal from home.

Delivering Customer Service



Decorate

The cafeteria atmosphere is as important as the food and the service. Young children tend to enjoy bright colors, whimsical characters, and cartoon heroes. Older students may appreciate a more sophisticated approach with seasonal or sports-oriented displays and popular music playing in the background.

Be sure to surround students with colorful visual images of fruits and vegetables to remind them of these healthful eating options.

- Use the posters in this guide, and contact fruit and vegetable associations to see the materials they provide *free of charge*. Copies of *Enjoy Fruits and Vegetables* can be ordered from the American Cancer Society at 1-800-ACS-2345.
- Use Team Nutrition's *Feed Me* poster, which has been a very popular item for older children. Find it at www.fns.usda.gov/tn.
- Purchase the *5 A Day The Color Way* materials from the Produce for Better Health Foundation. One of these posters is included in this package. Visit the Web site at www.5aday.org to see what else is available.
- Add posters of specific fruits and/or vegetables when you are featuring them on your line. Visit the Produce Marketing Association's Web site at www.aboutproduce.com to identify the fruit or vegetable you target and any consumer group supporting it that has materials available for schools.
- Use the static clings provided in this guide (Appendix pages 57 to 59) on the sneeze guards or small posters/magazine cutouts or any other items to draw students' attention to the fruits and vegetables you are offering. This is especially important if these items are in the center of your line with no foodservice person staffing that section.



**Use Team Nutrition's
Feed Me poster,
which has been a
very popular item
for older children.
Find it at
www.fns.usda.gov/tn.**



Work with the teachers, particularly the art teachers, to have students create decorations. If art students are studying composition, they could use fruits and vegetables as their subjects to create pictures for the cafeteria walls or the school hallways. Have middle and high school students decorate the walls of the cafeteria to provide a background for the salad bar.

Delivering Customer Service

Students at Silver Trail Middle School in Broward County, Florida created a mural of fruits and vegetables along one wall of the cafeteria. It gave students a learning experience, added color and design to the blank walls of the cafeteria, and created interest in the salad bar.

Middle school students at Kingsbridge Middle School in Michigan routinely help with decorating the cafeteria. They do this seasonally and get a sense of ownership of the space.

If your school has a multipurpose room instead of a separate dining room, concentrate on decorating your service line area. Develop a portable display to place outside the line for students as they enter the multipurpose room. It is a great place to showcase your menu items and create interest before the students enter the food line area.

Work with the teachers, particularly the art teachers, to have students create decorations.

Ask for Feedback

Knowing what the students think about your school foodservice is important.

Techniques that can be used to find out include:

- Formal questionnaires and surveys
- Informal interviews
- Small group discussions
- Suggestion boxes
- Focus groups
- Taste parties
- Advisory groups

Small group discussions and focus groups can be very beneficial in getting suggestions for improvement, along with help in making the changes.

If you or another member of your foodservice team circulates routinely throughout the dining room during lunch period, you will get plenty of opinions and suggestions. Employees can also receive feedback and identify unhappy customers on the serving line, at the dish room window, or near the disposal areas in the cafeteria.

It is very important to monitor customers' acceptance of new menu items, new brands of products, new recipes, and other changes. It is also good public relations to let the customers know that the staff cares. You can use the interview form on page 41 to assess customer opinions about your operation.

Now that you have evaluated the quality and appearance of your food and dining area, considered your customer service, received some customer input, and planned for necessary improvements, it is time to think about creating excitement about the nutritious and appealing foods and meals you have to offer.

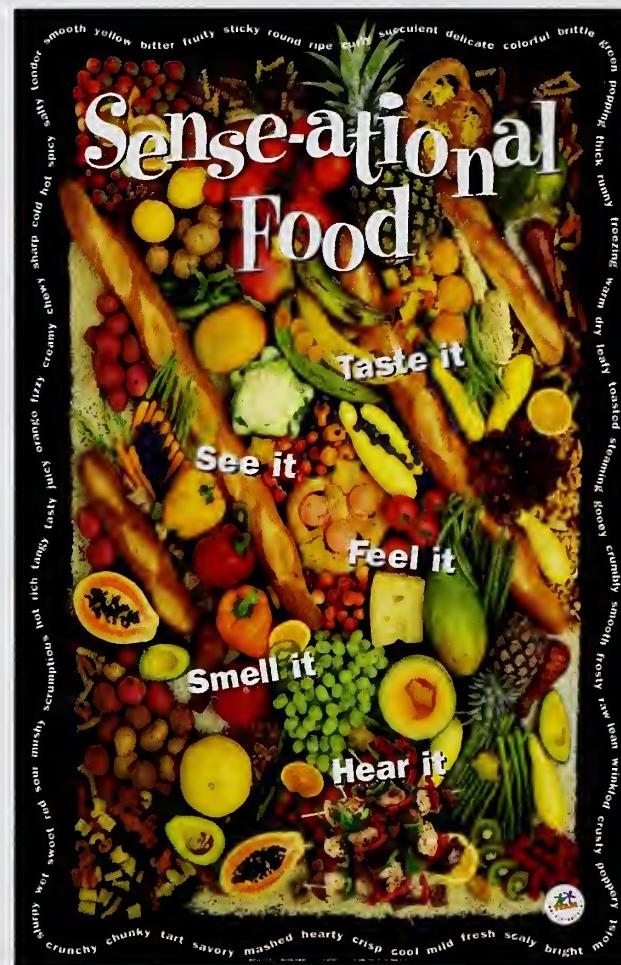
Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Jazz Up Your Menus

You can begin by making menu items sound like fun. Many students decide to purchase meals based solely on the day's menu. The menus you send home need to capture children's imaginations and entice them to try the foods. Menus also communicate information about the program to parents, teachers, and school administrators. What a great opportunity to educate your audience and gain support for your program.

- Add zip to your menu writing.
 - Give your menu items exciting names. Offer pears with peanut butter as a Peanut/Pear Explosion or pears with carrot and raisin salad as Confetti Pears.
 - Use sensory words such as crunchy, tart, steaming, scrumptious, etc., with your menu options.
 - Use the *Sense-ational Food* poster (included in this guide) to promote the sensory aspects of food. "Let's get Descriptive" on page 42, gives you a variety of suggested words. Be creative: use the school mascot to name some items.
 - Color the names of menu items: School Bus Yellow Corn, Forest Green Beans, Fire Engine Red Tomatoes.
 - Ask your student advisory group to help you name menu items. They can have fun brainstorming with you.
 - Look at recipe titles in cookbooks to find appealing words and descriptions.
- Include nutrition facts.
 - Indicate foods that are sources of vitamins A and C, iron, calcium and other vital nutrients. (See the chart on page 43.)
 - For special promotions, include lots of information about the fruit or vegetable you are featuring.

Many students decide to purchase meals based solely on the day's menu.



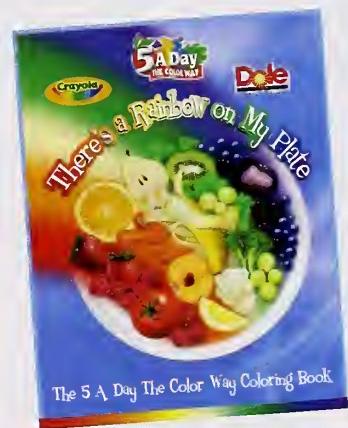
Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

- Add games or activities.
 - Visit the 5 A Day Web site at www.5aday.org to check out the kids' activity sheets. Add them to the back of your menu.



- Cafeteria art is available to download from the Dole 5 A Day Web site at www.dole5aday.com.

If you are able to print your menus in color, add color dots to indicate the colors of the fruits and vegetables in each day's menu. The Produce for Better Health (PBH) Foundation's new promotional campaign, *5 A Day The Color Way*, emphasizes the importance of eating all your colors. View their promotional items on the 5 A Day Web site at www.5aday.org. PBH has partnered with Crayola to create a curriculum titled *There's a Rainbow on My Plate*. Incorporate this idea into your menus.



PBH has partnered with Crayola to create a curriculum titled *There's a Rainbow on My Plate*.

- Give Prizes—such as water bottles, fanny packs, Frisbees, t-shirts.
- Promote healthy eating—and specifically eating fruits and vegetables—by giving larger prizes.
- Look for sources of promotional materials, such as local sports stores and athletic associations.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Reward students for trying new fruits and vegetables.

- Track foods on 5 A Day Cards.
 - Use the cards on Appendix pages 44 and 45 to have students track the fruits and vegetables they eat at breakfast and lunch. You can download the cards from www.5ADay.org.
 - Stamp the student's card every day, and at the end of the week have students turn in their cards for a prize.
 - Give bigger prizes for students who eat at least 5 servings a day at school.



- Create "Lucky Sticker Day."
 - Young children love stickers. When they try new fruits and vegetables, reward them with a sticker.
 - Or to add excitement to the serving line—put stickers on some of the salad plates or fruit and vegetable containers, and give small prizes to the lucky students who get them.
- Give "Pencils for Learning."
 - Plan a word game that features fruits and vegetables.
 - Give out special pencils to students who play the game.
- Hold a Poster Contest.
 - Challenge elementary school classes to have a poster contest.
 - The winning class gets a private party in the cafeteria with tablecloths and decorations.
- Invite a Special Visitor.
 - Ask a celebrity to dine with your students (college or high school athlete for elementary schools).
 - Have a costumed mascot visit the cafeteria. A staff member or parent volunteer can wear the costume to get students excited about eating fruits and vegetables.
 - The costume for Power Panther, the Eat Smart. Play Hard.™ spokes-character, is available to schools to use free of charge.



Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

- For more information, visit the Eat Smart. Play Hard.[™] Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/.

- Sponsor a "Fruity Fashion Event" for 1 week.
 - Divide classes into teams.
 - Each team draws a fruit, and the color of the fruit is their "fashion color."
 - Designate how many points the team will get if students wear clothing items corresponding to that color—or if they create fruit and veggie costumes from paper bags.
 - Tally the team totals at the end of the week.
 - Reward the winning team with a fruit treat.
- Create a "Fruit and Vegetable Trivia Contest."
 - Place table tents in the cafeteria with fun fruit and vegetable trivia.
 - Students receive a trivia questionnaire from the serving line.
 - They can find the answers to the questionnaire on the table tents.
 - Students enter questionnaires in a drawing for small prizes.
- Sponsor a "Veggie Walk."
 - Create vegetable sculptures or special vegetable dishes, or purchase miniature fruit and vegetable "seedie" characters from www.shop5aday.com.
 - Set up an area in the cafeteria or a classroom for the walk, typically a large circle.
 - Divide the circle into sections named for different vegetables.
 - Play music as students walk around in the circle.
 - When the music stops, students should stop so that a student is in each of the sections. Draw the name of one of the vegetables. The student in that section wins a veggie sculpture or special veggie dish.
- Have a "Guess the Beans Contest".
 - Fill a jar with beans, or black-eyed peas, raisins, pearl onions, or other appropriate fruits or vegetables.
 - Place it on the serving line or in the dining room.
 - Provide slips of paper and pencils for students to write their best guess.
 - Provide a box or container to hold the paper slips.
 - Award the winning student a fruit or vegetable prize. A favorite request might be fun.



Make eating fruits and vegetables fun for students.



Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Plan Promotions

Use your imagination and foodservice staff, faculty, and students to plan successful promotions. The worksheet on page 47 can help you get started. It can also be used to plan other school activities.

- **Select an objective and target group.** What do you want to accomplish and whom do you want to reach? You may be introducing a salad bar or new prepared salad choices, taste testing new fruits or vegetables before adding them to the menu, highlighting a specific fruit or vegetable, or promoting seasonally available items.
- **Determine a timeframe.** Will the promotion last for a day, a week, or a month?
- **Check the school's calendar.** You might want to plan promotions to coincide with or support other campus events, such as sports activities, dances, or plays. Or perhaps you want your promotion to be the week's big splash. Seasonal changes and holidays can offer opportunities for fun themes.
- **Select a title.** The title needs to get your customer's attention. A few possibilities are "5 A Day, Eat Your Colors Every Day," "There's a Rainbow on My Plate," "Ugli Fruit—What Is That?"
- **Plan for Publicity.** You need to specify in advance who your audience is and how you are going to get the word out. Publicity is critical to a successful promotion. But you do not need to do all the work. Local publicity resources can help, if you make the contacts and develop working relationships. Within the school, make use of the student announcements. Recruit student announcers to be part of your team. Make use of your menus, and ask art students to help with posters.
- **Work with student and parent advisory groups.** You should already be working with an advisory group. If not, consider setting one up for your special promotion and other activities, too.
- **Have displays at special events and meetings.** Announce your promotion with a display table and brochures at activities such as health fairs, Back-to-School Night, kindergarten orientation, and parent-teacher association meetings.

Fruit and vegetable promotions are opportunities to feature specific foods in your program.



The Team Nutrition School Activity Planner is another useful tool in planning special events. It's available at www.fns.usda.gov/tn.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Use Monthly Promotions

Fruit and vegetable promotions are opportunities to feature specific foods in your program. The calendar on Appendix page 49 provides a listing of promotion opportunities. Check the Events Calendar on the Team Nutrition Web site (www.fns.usda.gov/tn) each year for specific dates. Also, check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site to see their Fruit and Vegetable of the Month promotion (www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/month/index.htm).

Additional calendar information is available at the Dole 5 A Day Web site (www.dole5aday.com). Organizations that have specific promotional dates for their products, such as the Pear Bureau Northwest, often have materials and even a spokescharacter for you to use in your promotions. Go to the Produce Marketing Association Web site (www.aboutproduce.com) to find more information about food items and the associations supporting them, or contact your local produce vendor to learn about monthly promotions.

Teachers can provide classroom education with foodservice support.

During a promotion:

- Feature the product in your program.
- Work with teachers to have students study about the item and where it is grown.
- Develop bulletin boards or displays featuring the item.
- Put up posters.
- Have students develop artwork—get as many students as possible involved in the promotion.

After the promotion, be sure to include the featured item on your menus regularly.



Teachers can provide classroom education with foodservice staff support—or foodservice staff can be the educators with teachers' cooperation. In North Carolina, Jeffrey Swartz has seen both options work. In a district with 31 schools, he and the district staff started the Taste Explorers Club as a monthly program to encourage kids to try new foods. Kids tried food samples in the classroom as they learned about the origin, nutrition, and uses of the food. The next day, that item was available on the food line so the students could try it again. Some of the foods were snow peas, water chestnuts, star fruit, kiwifruit, and spaghetti squash. The Taste Explorers Club lessons occur on the same day of the month in every classroom. The foodservice staff provides all the tools teachers need to conduct the lesson—the food item pre-portioned into sample sizes; a napkin for each child; plastic forks; gloves for serving the food; trash bags and all the background information about the food. The teachers have nothing to prepare; they simply come to the cafeteria at a certain time, pick up their prepared tray, and take it back to the classroom. Now that he is in a smaller district (four schools), Swartz works directly with teachers and does the classroom presentations himself. Students have enjoyed trying red raspberries, blackberries, dried blueberries, dried cranberries and apricots, plus locally grown produce such as cabbage, asparagus, watermelon, strawberries, and cantaloupe.



Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Lakewood Elementary in St. Petersburg, Florida, has done several fruit and vegetable promotions. For example:

Pear

The Pear Bureau Northwest helped the school promote pears. Students wrote about pears in the classroom and colored pears to decorate a tree made from brown butcher paper in the cafeteria. Morning announcements included pear trivia and facts. The author of the *PearBear* book visited from Oregon, read to the 3rd grade students, and answered their questions about becoming a writer. Each student received an autographed book to keep, and *PearBear* himself passed out a bag that contained a pear, bookmark, tattoo, coloring sheet, and interesting information on pears. Foodservice staff introduced students to a variety of foods made with pears, and students who ate fruits and vegetables then participated in a drawing. The two winners each received a stuffed *PearBear*.



Remember that September is National 5 A Day Month, and March is National Nutrition Month.

Apple

Washington Apple is a great source for kid-friendly materials. During November the foodservice staff featured fresh apples. School announcements provided information about apples. The Johnny Appleseed story was read in the classes. Kindergarten students made bag puppets. An apple tree was constructed in the dining room using the brown butcher paper. Students in the 4th grade brainstormed for descriptive words about apples and created apple poems, stories, or posters. These were judged, and winners received Washington Apple characters, activity books, and erasers. All participants received bookmarks. Apples were available in a variety of ways for students to choose at lunch.

A screenshot of the National Cancer Institute's "5 A Day" website. The top navigation bar includes links for "About the Program", "State Coordinators Page", "Search", "Key Initiatives", and "What's New". The main content area features a banner for "EAT 5 A DAY for better health". Below the banner are sections for "Quick, Easy Tips", "5 Easy Ways to 5 A Day", "5 A Day Products", "Information and Resources", and "Short Cuts". Each section contains a list of links related to that topic. The footer includes links for "Press Releases", "Seasonal Packages", "Graham Kerr", and "NIH Radio".

Another apple promotion idea comes from the El Monte School District in California. Each fall the district highlights apple month and features a different variety each week. At the end of the promotion, students vote for their favorite variety and it becomes the apple choice for the year. So far, *Granny Smith* has been the consistent favorite.

Remember that September is National 5 A Day Month, and March is National Nutrition Month. Both are especially good months to promote fruits and vegetables. Get 5 A Day materials from the National Cancer Institute at www.5ADay.gov.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Promote Each Season

Holidays, seasons, planting time, harvest time, and other annual milestones offer options for fruit and vegetable promotions. Feature foods that are in season or foods that children associate with specific holidays. The seasonal food chart on page 50 can help you choose which fruits and vegetables to feature.

Place more emphasis on fruits and vegetables than on the meat or meat alternate in these meals to give children a new perspective on the celebration and to encourage them to try the featured items.

Conduct Taste Tests

Let students sample new foods. This is a great way to encourage students to add new items to their diet. Continue offering samples once items have been included on the line to entice more students to try them.

Broward County, Florida, schools participating in a pilot project to increase fruit and vegetable consumption offer samples on the line using taste-test size cups and spoons. All students are offered a taste of the fruits and vegetables as they get their lunch. Fox Trail Elementary School took it a step further by involving the PTA. The school stage was decorated with lots of great fruits and veggies, and samples of fruits and veggies in small plastic cups were put on tables on the stage for every student to sample. The nutrition staff dressed in colorful shirts and the students and parents loved it. As a followup, the students come to the cafeteria once a month and pass out samples of the fruit or veggie that foodservice staff is highlighting that month. While one group of students passes out the samples, another group of students surveys responses to the samples.



Let students sample new foods.

Here is their survey form:

Eat More Fruits and Vegetables Survey

Grade Level _____ Food Item _____

Have you eaten this food before?

Yes No If yes, how often? _____

Did you like this food?

Yes No If no, why not? _____

Would you eat this food if it were prepared another way?

Yes No

What particular vegetable or fruit would you like to see served at lunch?

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Get businesses involved.

Taste tests also provide an opportunity to gain community support for your efforts. Involve local grocers, distributors, farm markets or growers, where possible, in introducing new items to students. You may want to contact your State's 5 A Day Coordinator to solicit help and ask about other activities in your area. They may be able to help you arrange for taste tests. Find the coordinator in your area on the CDC 5 A Day Web site (www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday). Educate your students about local sources of fruits and vegetables, and educate local businesses about your efforts to improve students' eating habits.

Public Health Dietitians worked with Ben Franklin Elementary in Grand Forks, North Dakota, to encourage students to eat more fruits and vegetables as snacks. Local grocers donated trays of fresh veggies that were served as the classroom snack after a nutrition lesson about the importance of eating more fresh fruits and vegetables. Now the students are bringing fresh fruits and vegetables at snack time and enjoying them.

Taste tests also provide an opportunity to gain community support for your efforts.

Consider purchasing through co-ops.

Increasing offerings of fruits and vegetables, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, can be challenging. Small and rural school districts have an especially difficult time finding enough vendors to bid on their orders to receive competitive prices. Buying cooperatives (co-ops) provide a good alternative for these schools. For example, the South East Cooperative Utilizing Resources Efficiently (SECURE) is made up of 11 North Carolina school districts. Working together they buy and distribute high quality foods to their students and, as an added benefit, they introduce unusual fruits and vegetables to their students.

Promotions encouraging students to eat different types of fruits and vegetables have become common in Cumberland County, North Carolina, school cafeterias. Through SECURE, their cooperative buying partnership, they have the opportunity to participate in a program titled Farm LINC. Farm LINC is a promotion that encourages school systems in the co-op to offer specialty fruits on their menu once a month as a fresh fruit option. Cumberland County takes this promotion one step further by offering the specialty fruit to all students in a taste test as well as on the lunch serving line. These are items students do not get the chance to try every day, such as:

- August – Yellow or Orange Watermelon
- September – Dinosaur Eggs (Pluots)
- October – Star Fruit
- November – Cactus Pear
- December – Horned Melon
- January – Kumquats
- February – Blood Oranges
- March – Fresh Pineapple
- April – Plantain Bananas

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables



Each month cafeteria managers receive information on the specialty fruit, along with signs and banners to hang in their cafeterias. Students can pick up a tasting of the fruit from the line as a free food item. Some cafeteria managers give a short classroom presentation to the students about the history and origin of the specialty fruit along with a tasting party.

Link the Cafeteria and the Classroom

Recruit teachers to help change children's eating behavior. School foodservice professionals and teachers, especially health educators, are natural partners. Healthy meals give students the energy and nourishment they need to succeed in the classroom, and classroom activities can encourage children to choose foods for a healthy diet.

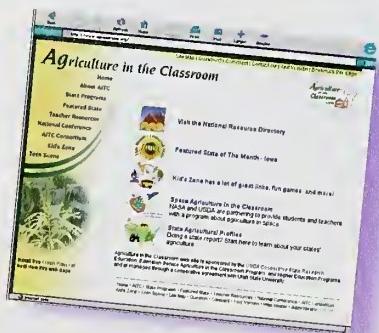
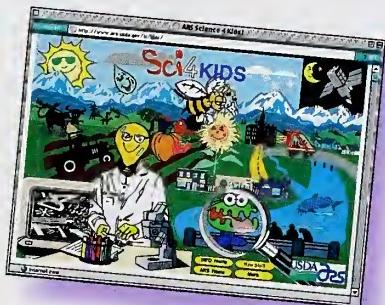
**Recruit teachers
to help change
children's eating
behavior.**

- At the beginning of the school year, involve teachers in the planning process for increasing fruit and vegetable consumption. Teachers are role models for students, and they can incorporate healthy eating messages into everyday classroom activities. In many elementary schools, teachers review the menus with their students each morning. This is a great opportunity to remind students about the importance of eating fruits and vegetables and to make them aware of the items available that day.
- Make the cafeteria a learning lab to expand the classroom learning experience and reinforce healthy eating choices. If students are studying a specific food and its benefits, that food could be highlighted on the menu that week. Alternatively, if a class is studying a food item, you may be able to do a classroom presentation about that food and provide samples for the children to taste.



Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Check out the Science 4 Kids Web site, the National Agricultural Library Kids Science Page Web site, and the Ag in the Classroom Web site.



At Manatee Elementary in Florida, the kindergarten students sang a song about several specific fruits being buried under the snow. After the song, the students were able to sit with the teacher and make a fresh fruit cup with those fruits and a plop of light-whipped cream on top, like "snow." Another kindergarten class was studying about Nigeria. They learned that Nigerian children love to eat fruit and were treated to a cup of mixed fruit including cantaloupe, honeydew, pineapple, and grapes. If the manager cannot always provide fruit for individual classrooms to taste, local grocers or growers may be willing to provide samples.



- Incorporate nutrition education into your education emphasis programs—such as reading.

Pioneer Elementary School in Merced, California, combined reading and nutrition education in a monthly foodservice promotion. Teachers worked with foodservice staff to encourage students to identify foods in the books they read. The class with the most different books that had foods in them received a fruit smoothie party. The foodservice director brought ingredients such as fresh strawberries, nonfat yogurt, and honey to the classroom and made smoothies for all the students. She gave them the recipe to take home, too. Needless to say, the promotion was a big success with the students and teachers.

- Check out the Science 4 Kids Web site at www.ars.usda.gov/is/kids/, the National Agricultural Library Kids Science Page Web site at www.nal.usda.gov/kids/, and the Ag in the Classroom Web site at www.agclassroom.org/ for useful information. Another source, which includes lesson plans, is the Canned Vegetable Council, Inc. Web site, Love those Vegetables, at www.cannedveggies.org.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Vegetable/Fruit Challenge

Bloomfield, Connecticut School Food Service conducted a 15 day Vegetable/Fruit Challenge in all its elementary schools. Using Team Nutrition Grant Funds, Marilyn Ricci developed this cafeteria/classroom activity and the Challenge Chart. Each classroom established a numerical goal representing the number of vegetables/fruits the class would taste at lunchtime. Each day after lunch, the students would go to the chart to check the number of vegetables/fruits they had eaten that day. The chart is designed to show the class cumulative total so it is easy for students to see how far they are from their goal. Teachers, parents and foodservice staff reported increased consumption of vegetables/fruits during the Challenge. A copy of the Challenge Chart is included in the poster folder. It is printed on synthetic paper so washable markers will wipe off. Challenge instructions are included on page 51 of the Appendixes.



School Garden

If your school has a school garden, work with the teachers and students to harvest, prepare, and feature school-grown foods in your program. Depending on the size of the garden, these items may be provided as a taste test or added to salads or other dishes. If your school district and county health office allow, bring the students into the kitchen to clean and prepare the foods themselves. Feature the foods they have harvested with special signs, or have the students serve the foods to other students.

The William Ramsay Elementary and Cora Kelly School for Math, Science, and Technology in Alexandria, Virginia, have converted portions of their schoolyard into exciting outdoor learning areas. Both schoolyard habitats have been certified by the National Wildlife Federation and provide opportunities for students to learn not only about their environment but also about history, literature, art, math, science, and gardening. The habitats include stepping stones and painted rocks created by students, colonial herbs, Virginia cash crops, plants to help



If your school has a school garden, work with the teachers and students to harvest, prepare, and feature school-grown foods in your program.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

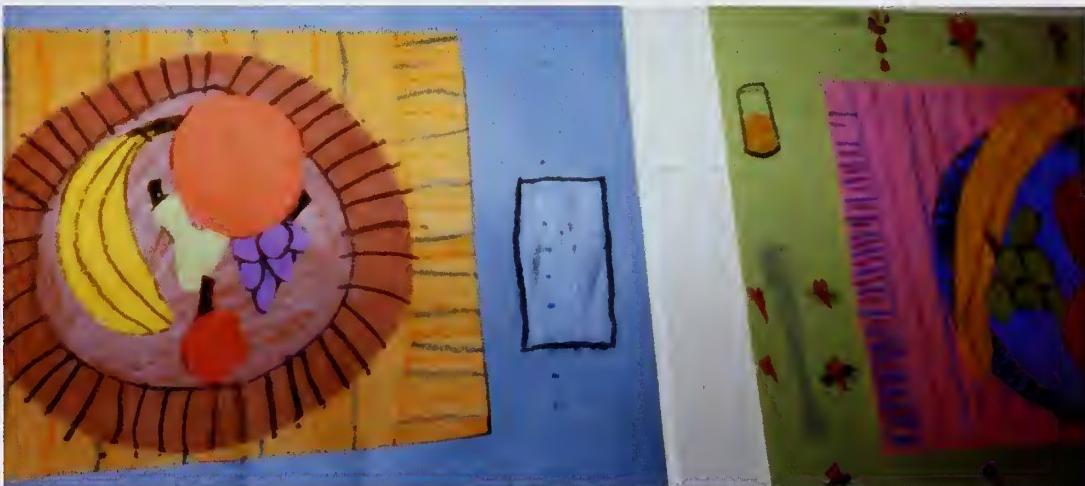
teach interdependence of living things, and vegetable gardens. Students at both schools planted peanuts, squash, beans, peppers, cabbages, lettuce, onions, and radishes. The vegetables are harvested, prepared, and served by students with the help of the cafeteria managers and volunteers. Through this joint project, students have a unique opportunity to learn the whole cycle of food production.

Visit the National Gardening Association's Web site at www.garden.org or go to the Team Nutrition Web site and look for *Get Growing — From the Ground Up* under the Educator's button (www.fns.usda.gov/tn). Other gardening Web sites are Texas A and M University at <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/>, the California Department of Education at www.cde.ca.gov/nsd/nets/g_index.htm, and Gardens 4 Kids at www.gardens4kids.com/.

Create fun and educational bulletin boards

Bulletin boards deliver your message every day. Use one for promotions and one for nutrition education. Consider hiding fun facts and giving students rewards for locating the answers. Instead of decorating them yourself every time, involve the students. Work with the art teacher or the classroom teachers to make it an educational activity. When students are studying a country, identify fruits or vegetables grown there and ask students to develop a bulletin board that tells about them. Feature those items in your meal service.

Get students to help make a colorful fruit and vegetable collage.



Get students to help make a colorful fruit and vegetable collage. Post all five colors, and ask students to cut out and bring in pictures of fruits and vegetables and place them under the appropriate color on the bulletin board.

Post a daily reminder to choose fruits and vegetables. The American Dietetic Association includes a "daily tip" on their Web site at www.eatright.org, which may be helpful. These tips are not limited to fruits and vegetables but may give you useful information. Also, 5 A Day (www.5aday.org) and Produce

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Marketing Association (www.aboutproduce.org) Web sites have information you can use. Dole 5 A Day has downloadable fruit and vegetable art and graphics available (www.dole5aday.com). Another option is to go into the Internet and type clip art in the address to begin a search. Many of the sites offer free art.

Signs

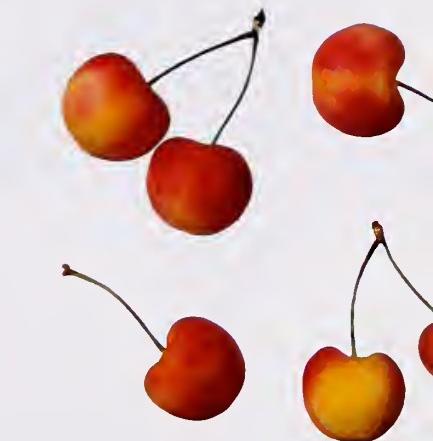
Add signs to the serving line to attract students' attention to the school meal and the fruit and vegetable choices. Create a fruit display in a basket or on a platter near the register, and ask classes to design a sign to advertise this nutritious and appetizing choice. Then rotate the signs that the classes create. This will encourage students to select some fresh fruit before they check out.

Advertise

Let everyone know what you have to offer especially during promotions. You can always promote your "Best Buy in Town" lunch in the school hallways.

Introduce your students to chefs

Bring a chef into your school to create lots of excitement among the students and teachers, and offer foodservice staff opportunities to learn new skills. Many chefs enjoy sharing their knowledge with others, especially children. Also, culinary students need service hours for certification, so this can be a win-win-win situation—for you, your students and the budding chefs.



**Bring a chef into
your school to create
lots of excitement
among the students
and teachers.**

"Chefs Connection" is a listing of chefs that support Team Nutrition on the Healthy School Meals Resource System at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov>. If there are no chefs listed for your area, contact State or local restaurant associations, local restaurants, hospitals, and culinary schools, or contact the American Culinary Foundation (ACF) chapter in your State. To find the ACF State Chapter Presidents, click on the ACF Regional Chapters map that is also on the Web site.



Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Days of Taste™ is a discovery-based program provided by the American Institute of Wine and Food for fourth or fifth grade students. It helps students learn about food and how it weaves its way through daily life from farm to table. To find out more visit the Web site at www.aiwf.org.

If a chef is not available, consider having a cooking or food preparation event involving school foodservice staff, teachers, and parents. Work with the teacher to make it a classroom/cafeteria experience. Have students bring in a variety of vegetables, prepare them, and combine them into soup or snacks. Help children dice them and feel texture—then taste. Create a veggie tray so they can sample all the vegetables with lowfat dips. Children will usually try new vegetables when they help prepare them. You might also want to work with the PTA to make this a family event in the evening.

Fairs get the community involved in your school and expand the resources available to you.

Hold assemblies and use daily announcements

Promote fruit and vegetable consumption throughout the school day and at events and activities. Examples:

- Present skits at assemblies.
- Encourage students to write and record a rap or song for morning announcements.
- Invite speakers or spokescharacters (PearBear, Washington Apple, Power Panther, or other fruit and vegetable characters).
- Ask one of the classes studying about fruits and vegetables in science or social studies to share information with the whole school.
- Include a daily fruit and vegetable promotion in morning announcements. Visit www.eatright.org to see their “Tip of the Day.”

Cumberland County, North Carolina, Child Nutrition Services staff have fruit and vegetable assemblies and fairs for their elementary schools on a regular basis. The school receives a regular weekly delivery of fruits and vegetables, and the cafeteria employees cut them into bite-size pieces. Child Nutrition Services dietitians go into an assembly and do a lively presentation on the Food Guide Pyramid and the history and importance of the fruits and vegetables they are serving.



Sponsor Nutrition or Health Fairs

Hold a nutrition or health fair to educate students and parents, and generate interest in healthy eating. These can be in school for students, after school for students and parents, or among schools for the whole community. In addition to providing students and parents with useful information, fairs get the community involved in your school and expand the resources available to you.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Team Nutrition's *School Activity Planner* provides schools with a step-by-step guide to planning a fair. All Team Nutrition Schools receive the guide when they enroll, and all Team Nutrition materials are available free to Team Nutrition Schools. (To enroll as a Team Nutrition School, go to the Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn, click on Join the Team, download the enrollment form, complete it, and have it signed. Then just fax it to the number indicated, and your school will receive a kit of material.)

When you promote fruits and vegetables in your program, you promote the good health of our children.

Manatee Elementary School in Palm Beach County, Florida, conducted a Health Fair with students as the educators. Students from their Discovery Lab (gifted and talented program) researched a variety of health topics including the food guide pyramid, brain power, bacteria and the importance of hand washing, sun protection, and physical activity. Students created display booths on their topics and then presented their findings to fellow students as the class groups visited their booths. There were 28 separate booths. This gave the students a variety of educational opportunities—some students researched and presented the information; some visited the fair. The school foodservice manager also arranged a visit by Power Panther, the Eat Smart. Play Hard.TM spokescharacter. Power Panther provided an added treat of fruit and vegetable snacks as students returned to their classrooms.



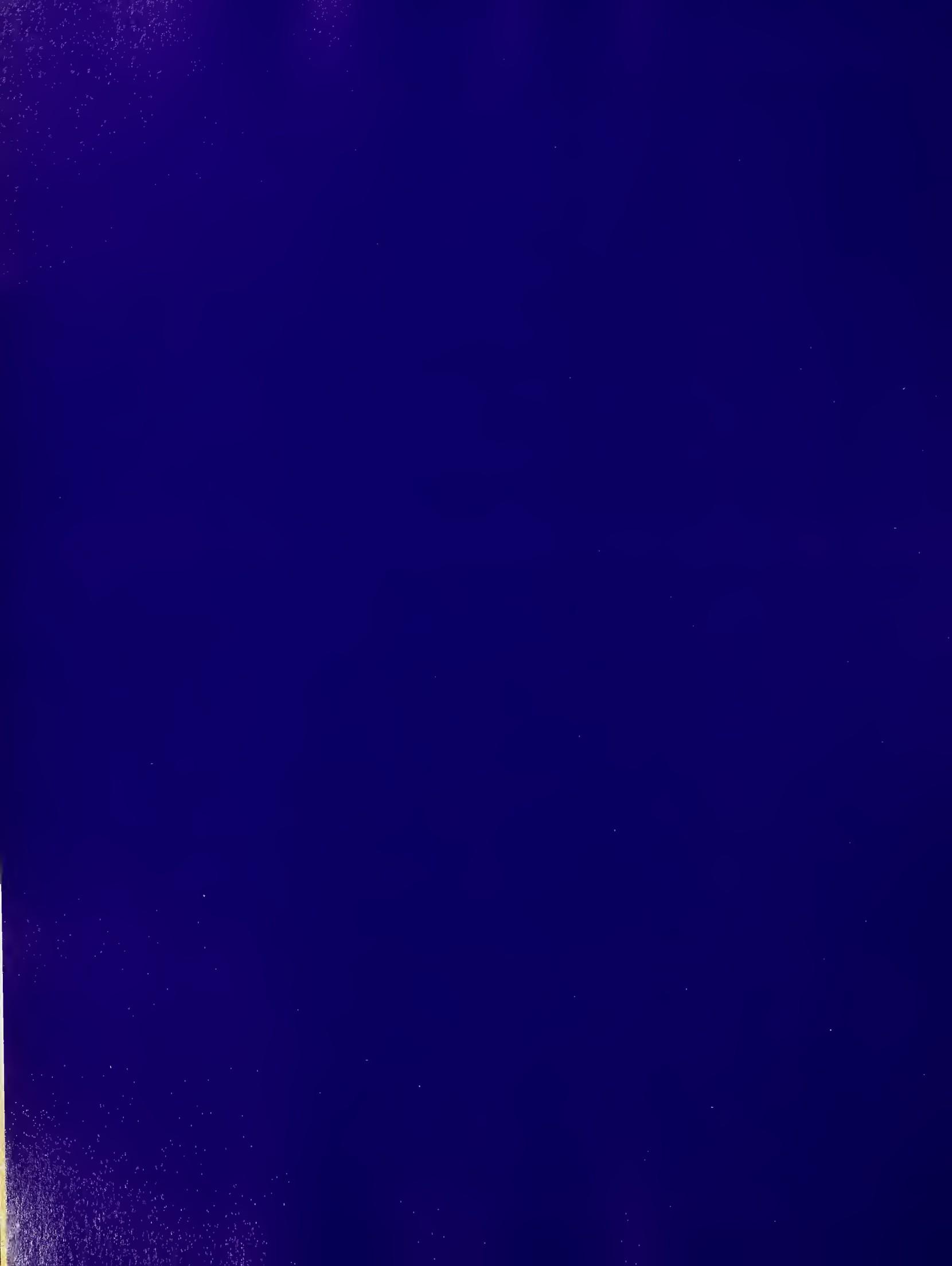
Engage Your Community

You can also develop ties with the community by planning a field trip to the grocery store, a farm, a farmers market, or an orchard. These are great learning experiences for students.

An organization called "Free Field Trips" helps plan trips to grocery stores and restaurants in various areas around the country at no charge to the school. These trips offer students opportunities to sample a variety of foods at places where they might later influence family shopping decisions or buy food themselves. Call them at 1-800-987-6409 or visit their Web site at www.fieldtripfactory.com to see if they operate in your area.



Focusing on fruits and vegetables offers exciting opportunities to attract students to school meals. We hope this guide will stimulate your enthusiasm and creativity. When you promote fruits and vegetables in your program, you promote the good health of our children.





Appendices



Food Garnishing Colors

Yellow/Orange

Vegetables

- Carrots, rings, shredded, or strips
- Acorn or butternut squash meat
- Pumpkin meat
- Summer squash (yellow)
- Yellow turnips
- Corn

Fruit

- Apricot halves or sections
- Cantaloupe balls
- Grapefruit skin/zest/strips
- Orange skin/zest/strips
- Lemon sections or slices
- Nectarines
- Star fruit
- Peach halves with jelly
- Peach slices
- Persimmons
- Spiced peaches
- Tangerines
- Papaya
- Bananas

Sweets

- Apricot preserves
- Orange marmalade
- Peach preserves
- Peanut brittle, crushed
- Sugar, yellow or orange

Cheese and Eggs

- Balls, grated, strips
- Egg, hard-cooked or sections
- Deviled egg halves
- Riced egg yolk
- Rosettes

Red

Vegetables

- Beets, pickled, julienne, or sliced
- Paprika
- Pimento, chopped, strips
- Radicchio
- Radishes, red, sliced, roses

- Red onion
- Red cabbage
- Red grapes
- Red skin pears
- Red skin potatoes
- Stuffed olives, sliced
- Red peppers, rings, strips, shredded
- Tomato: catsup, chili sauce

Fruit

- Apples
- Plums
- Watermelon
- Cherries
- Red raspberries
- Cinnamon apple
- Strawberries
- Cranberries
- Maraschino cherries

Sweets

- Cinnamon drops ("red hots")
- Cranberry glaze, jelly
- Gelatin cubes
- M&M's
- Loganberry, raspberry
- Red jelly: apple, cherry

Food Garnishing Colors

Green

Vegetables

- Beet greens
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrot tops
- Celery leaves and stalks
- Collard greens
- Corn husks
- Cucumber skins
- Endive
- Green beans
- Green pepper strips, chopped
- Green tomatoes
- Herbs: dill, cilantro, etc.
- Kale
- Leeks

- Lettuce cups
- Lettuce, shredded
- Mint Leaves
- Olives
- Parsley, sprig, chopped
- Peas
- Pickles: Burr, gherkins, strips, fans, rings
- Scallion
- Spinach leaves
- Watercress
- Winter squash: Acorn, Buttercup
- Zucchini

Fruit

- Avocado
- Cherries
- Frosted grapes
- Green apple
- Green apple sauce
- Green plums
- Kiwifruit
- Lime wedges, zest/skin
- Papaya skin
- Pear skin
- Pineapple tops
- Watermelon skin
- Honeydew melon

Sweets

- Citron
- Gelatin cubes
- Skittles
- Green sugar
- M&M's
- Gummi Bears

White

Vegetables

- Cauliflower
- Celery cabbage
- Celery: curls, hearts, strips
- Cucumber rings, strips, wedges, cups
- Jicama
- Mashed potato, rosette
- Onion rings
- Onion, pickled
- Radish meat
- Radishes, white

Fruit

- Apple balls
- Apple rings
- Gingered apples
- Grapefruit sections
- Pear balls
- Pear sections
- White raisins

Sweets

- Marshmallows
- Almonds
- Mints
- Whipped cream
- Powdered sugar
- Cream cheese frosting
- Sliced, hard-cooked egg white
- Shredded coconut

Black-Brown

Breads

- Black radish skin
- Black raspberries
- Blueberries
- Caviar
- Chocolate sauce
- Chocolate-covered mint
- Eggplant skin
- Olives, ripe
- Pickled walnuts
- Prunes
- Prunes, sliced
- Raisins, currants
- Truffles

Brown-Tan

Miscellaneous

- Cinnamon
- Dates
- French-fried cauliflower
- French-fried onions
- Mushrooms
- Nutmeats
- Nut-covered cheese balls
- Potato chips
- Rosettes
- Toasted coconut

Plan a Lunch

Plan a Lunch Script

ADAPTED FROM CALIFORNIA SHAPE



YOU WILL NEED:

- A group of students in a classroom, conference room, or the cafeteria
- Chalk and board or flip chart and felt pens
- This outline
- For each student:
 - Your school's printed menu
 - PLAN A LUNCH worksheet (see page 39)
 - School LUNCH Means Good Nutrition coloring sheets (see page 40)
 - Dietary Guidelines brochure or Food Guide Pyramid information (available at www.fns.usda.gov/tn)
 - A reward for helping (pencil, stickers, food item coupon, or fruit or vegetable snack)

WHAT TO DO:

1. Introduce yourself (and anyone assisting you). Tell why you are here. **SMILE!**

Hi! My name is _____ and I prepare food for you in the lunch and breakfast programs here at school.

I'm glad to be here with you today because I need your help in planning a lunch menu that you would like to eat.

2. Get the students interested and involved.

How many of you eat lunch in the cafeteria?

How many of you have helped plan a school lunch menu before?

3. Describe your meal plan/pattern. If students are not familiar with the food guide pyramid, briefly discuss the food groups and serving sizes.

Pass out your printed menu.

Every month you get a lunch menu like this to take home.

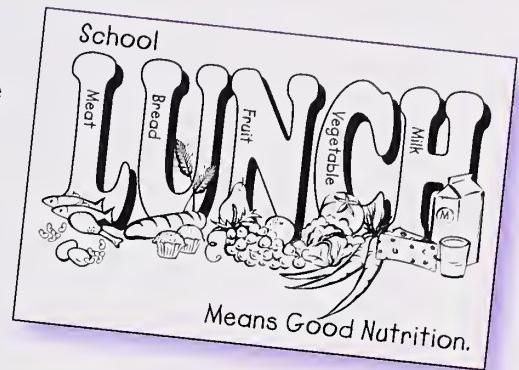
When we plan lunches for school, we have to include 5 things – can anyone tell me what they are?



Plan a Lunch

YOUNGER STUDENTS: Hold up 5 fingers. Ask students to name the meal components they know and write them on the board as they are called out. Fill in the ones they don't mention. Then pass out the School LUNCH Means Good Nutrition coloring sheet and review it briefly.

OLDER STUDENTS: Write the letters LUNCH on the board vertically (up & down). Ask students for what meal components they know, and write them to the right of the appropriate letter in LUNCH as they are called out. Fill in what they don't know to complete the word puzzle below:



Lean	meat or alternate
Unrefined (whole grain)	bread or grain
Nature's fresh	fruit
Crisp and fresh	vegetable
Half-pint lowfat	milk

4. Plan the menu, one item at a time.

Pass out the *Plan A Lunch* worksheet to each student. Explain that different colors and textures of food make the lunch more eye and taste appealing. Ask for suggestions for each of the 5 items listed on the chalkboard. Have students (especially younger ones) look at the printed menu for ideas. Be sure they realize salads can be main dishes. Also, planning should not be limited to items already being served. Listen to their suggestions for new offerings.

Okay, what is your favorite main dish, including a meat or meat substitute? What are some others?



List their suggestions on the board, and then have students vote, or somehow decide on each one. Have them write it on their worksheet.

And, what kind of bread or grain do we want with that?

Go through all 5 meal items in the same way. Be sure to help them identify some new fruits and vegetables or new ways to present familiar ones. When you get to the end, students will probably ask to have a dessert or other "extra" on their menu. Explain that this isn't always included, because the meal may already meet all the requirements.

It's okay to have extra food now and then. What would you like to add to this menu?

Highlight something about the extra they suggest that makes you feel good about serving it. For example:

I feel okay about serving ice cream because it provides some calcium to keep your bones strong. OR: A juice bar is a good choice because it is made with real fruit juice.

Plan a Lunch

5. Review the menu they have planned. Tell them how it will appear on the printed menu. (As a courtesy, you may want to discuss this with the teacher first.)

This looks like a delicious menu! This will be printed on the menu for _____ (tell them which month and when it will be available), with your class name.

I will let your teacher know what day it will be served, and I hope you can all come eat lunch in the cafeteria that day. We will have a special table set just for you! (You will need to be creative to come up with a "cool" idea for your older students."

6. Thank them for their help.

You have been a great help to me today, and to say "thanks" I would like each of you to have _____. (Provide whatever item you have available for them. This can be some specialty fruits and vegetables or a non-food item.)

SEE YOU AT LUNCH!



Plan a Lunch Worksheet

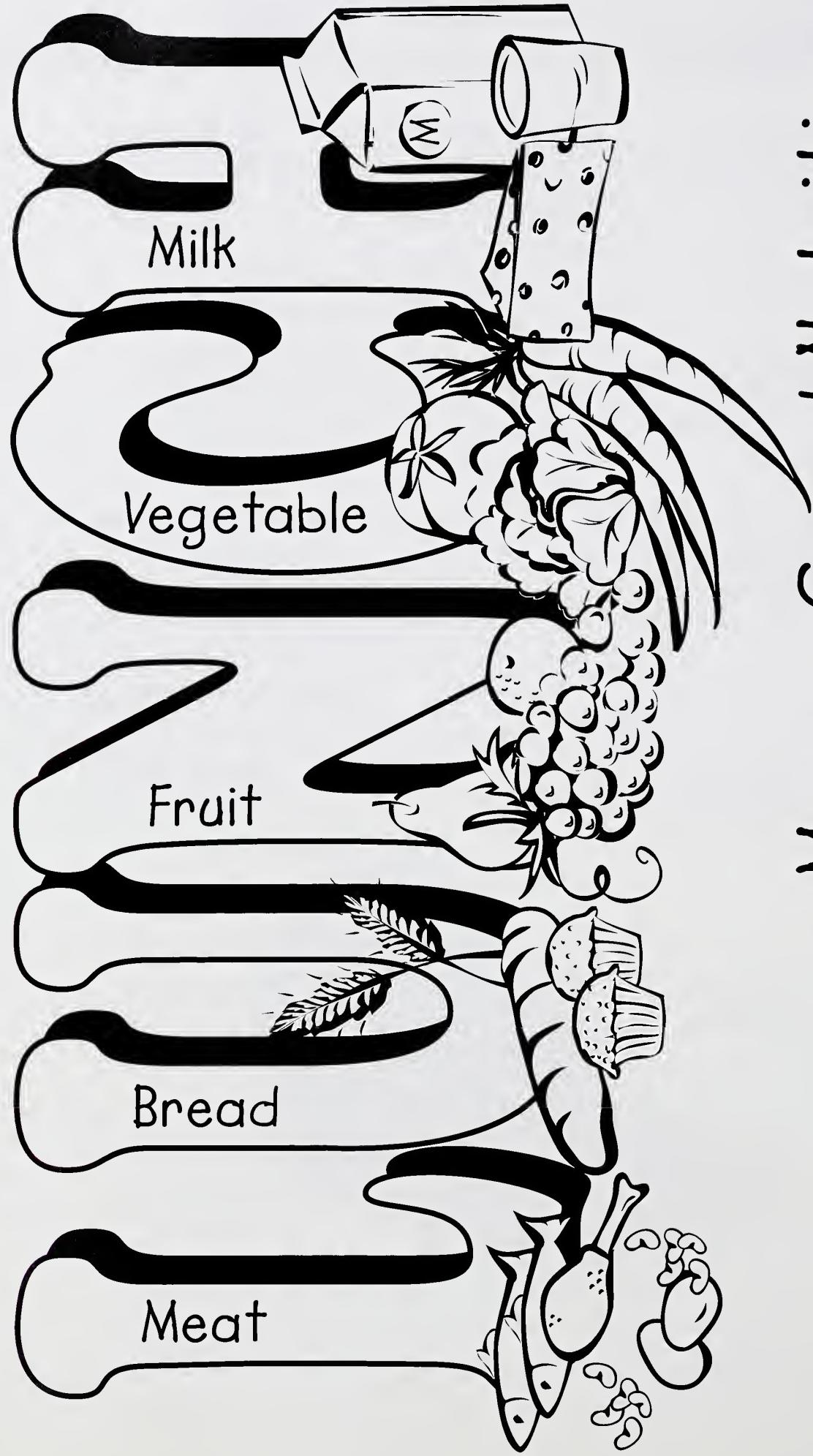
What goes into a school lunch?

1. Meat or Meat Substitute
2. Breads or Grains
3. Fruits or Vegetables
4. Vegetables or Fruits
5. Milk

Healthy Choices

1 Meat or Meat Substitute		Lean & Beans
2 Breads or Grains		Unrefined, whole grains
3 Fruits or Vegetables		Nature's freshest
4 Vegetables or Fruits		Crisp & fresh
5 Milk		Half-pint, lowfat

School



Means Good Nutrition.

Interview Form

Time of Interview _____

Day of Week _____

Date _____

Hi, I am _____, conducting a survey on school foodservice. If you have about two minutes to answer a few questions, we would very much appreciate your opinion.

1. How often do you eat school lunch?

- Daily 2-3 times a week Once a month Occasionally

2. Rate the following as very good, good, fair, poor:

a. How would you rate the quality of the meal you had today?

- very good good fair poor

b. What do you think of the variety of choices of food?

- very good good fair poor

c. Do you have enough food to satisfy your appetite?

- very good good fair poor

d. How would you rate the food service employees?

- very good good fair poor

e. What rating would you give the atmosphere in the dining area?

- very good good fair poor

f. How would you rate the value of your meal in relation to the cost?

- very good good fair poor

3. What do you particularly like about your school's food service?

4. What do you particularly dislike about your school's food service?

5. What suggestions do you have?

Let's Get Descriptive

Alluring	Eye-catching	Mild	Sparkling
Aromatic	Fiery	Milky	Spicy
Attractive	Firm	Moist	Springy
Bitter	Flaky	Mouth-watering	Steaming
Blackened	Flavorful	Mushy	Sticky
Bland	Fleshy	Nutty	Strong
Bright	Florid	Peppery	Subtle
Brilliant	Fluffy	Pink	Succulent
Brittle	Fragrant	Piquant	Sugary
Bumpy	Freezing	Plump	Sweet
Chewy	Fresh	Popping	Sweet-smelling
Chilly	Frosty	Prickly	Tangy
Chunky	Fruity	Pulpy	Tantalizing
Clean	Fuzzy	Pungent	Tart
Coarse	Gooey	Raw	Tasty
Cold	Gorgeous	Red	Tempting
Colorful	Green	Refreshing	Tender
Cool	Hard	Rich	Thick
Creamy	Hearty	Ripe	Toasted
Crimson	Heavy	Robust	Understated
Crisp	Hot	Rough	Velvety
Crumbly	Icy	Round	Verdant
Crunchy	Inviting	Salty	Vibrant
Curly	Irresistible	Savory	Vivid
Delectable	Juicy	Scrumptious	Warm
Delicate	Knotty	Sharp	Wet
Delicious	Leafy	Shiny	Wrinkled
Distinctive	Lean	Showy	Yellow
Dry	Lumpy	Slick	Yummy
Earthy	Luscious	Slurpy	Zesty
Enticing	Lustrous	Smooth	
Exciting	Mashed	Soft	
Exquisite	Mellow	Sour	

Fruit and Vegetable Sources of Vitamins

Vitamin A Sources	Vitamin C Sources	Iron Sources	Calcium Sources (nondairy)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apricots• Cantaloupes• Carrots• Collard greens• Hot chili peppers• Leaf lettuce• Romaine lettuce• Mangoes• Nectarines• Peaches• Spinach• Sweet potatoes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Broccoli• Cabbage• Cantaloupes• Cauliflower• Grapefruit• Green peppers• Brussels sprouts• Kiwifruit• Oranges• Papayas• Strawberries• Mustard greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• White beans• Spinach• Chickpeas (garbanzo beans)• Lentils• Lima beans• Pink beans• Winged beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spinach• Mustard greens• Collards• Beet greens• Figs• Papaya• Rhubarb• Okra• Wakame• Kelp• Turnip greens• Amaranth• Black turtle beans• Chinese Cabbage (pak choi)• Chickpeas• Hummus• Cranberry beans• Great northern beans• French beans• Lupines• Navy beans• White beans• Winged beans• Yellow beans• Chickory greens

Combining iron sources with vitamin C sources helps with iron absorption in the body.

Instructions:

See how many colors you can eat everyday. Fill in the fruit and/or vegetable you eat each day under the color category. (See back for examples of fruits and vegetables in their color categories.) Aim for one in each of the 5 categories every day.

5 A Day The Color Way

	Blue/ Purple	Green	White	Yellow/ Orange	Red
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					



Fruits & Vegetables by Color Category

Blue/Purple	Green	White	Yellow/Orange	Red
Purple Asparagus Purple Belgian Endive Blackberries Black Currants Black Salsify Blueberries Purple Carrots Dried Plums Eggplant Elderberries Purple Figs Purple Grapes Purple Peppers Plums Potatoes (purple flesh) Purple Cabbage Raisins	Green Apples Artichokes Arugula Asparagus Avocados Green Beans Broccoli Broccoli Rabe Brussels Sprouts Green Cabbage Celery Chayote Squash Chinese Cabbage (Napa/Bok Choy) Cucumbers Endive Green Grapes Honeydew Melon Kiwifruit Leafy greens Leeks Lettuce Limes Okra Green Onion Peas (Green, Snap, Snow) Green Pears Green Pepper Spinach Zucchini	Bananas Brown Pears Cauliflower Dates Garlic Ginger Jerusalem Artichokes Jicama Kohlrabi Mushrooms White Nectarines Onions Parsnips White Corn White Peaches Potatoes (white flesh) Shallots Turnips	Yellow Apples Apricots Yellow Beets Butternut Squash Cantaloupe Cape Gooseberries Yellow Figs Grapefruit Golden Kiwifruit Lemon Mangoes Nectarines Oranges Papayas Peaches Yellow Pears Yellow Peppers Persimmons Pineapples Yellow Potatoes Pumpkin Rutabagas Yellow Summer Squash Sweet Corn Sweet Potatoes Tangerines Yellow Tomatoes Yellow Watermelon Yellow Winter Squash	Red Apples Beets Blood Oranges Cherries Cranberries Pink/Red Grapefruit Red Grapes Red Onions Red Pears Red Peppers Pomegranates Red Potatoes Radicchio Radishes Raspberries Rhubarb Strawberries Tomatoes Watermelon

Promotion Planning Worksheet

Objective: (What are we trying to accomplish?)

Activity: _____

Food Item(s): _____

Target Group: (Check one or more.)

Students Parents Teachers Administrators

Date(s): _____

Coincides with campus events? Holidays?

Theme and Title: _____

Publicity:

Print Media In-school Other _____

Dress/Decorations/Merchandising Tools: _____

Incentives/Prizes: _____

Who is responsible? _____

Costs/Expenses: _____

Evaluation: Complete after your promotion by checking the appropriate rating below.

1. How well did this promotion accomplish our objective(s)?

poor satisfactory good excellent

2. If a new food item was introduced, was it well received?

poor satisfactory good excellent

3. How did students respond?

poor satisfactory good excellent

4. How did staff respond?

poor satisfactory good excellent

What roadblocks did you face, and how did you overcome them?

What are your suggestions for improvement?

You may also want to track participation and sales to assess the economic effect of your promotion.

Promotion Evaluation Worksheet

Promotion

Did Promotion Accomplish Objectives?

- poor satisfactory
- good very good
- excellent

Evaluation

Comments

Were Items Selected Well Received?

- poor satisfactory
- good very good
- excellent

Comments

What Was Response From Students?

- poor satisfactory
- good very good
- excellent

Comments

What Was Response From Staff?

- poor satisfactory
- good very good
- excellent

Comments

What Improvements Can Be Made?

Comments

Events Calendar

January	February	March
Fiber Focus Month National Apricot Day	National Cherry Month National Hot Breakfast Month Potato Lover's Month Sweet Potato Month	National Frozen Food Month National Nutrition Month National School Breakfast Week National Agriculture Week Johnny Appleseed Day National Agriculture Day
April	May	June
Florida Tomato Month National Pecan Month Soyfoods Month	Salad Month Salsa Month International Pickle Week	Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month Papaya Month Gazpacho Aficionado Time
July	August	September
Baked Beans Month Blueberry Month National Culinary Arts Month National Salad Week	Get Acquainted with Kiwifruit Month Watermelon Day Sneak Some Zucchini Onto Your Neighbor's Porch Night More Herbs, Less Salt Day	Better Breakfast Month Ethnic Food Month National 5 A Day Month Organic Harvest Month Potato Month Food Service Employees Week
October	November	December
Peanuts Month Popcorn Month Vegetarian Month National School Lunch Week World Vegetarian Day Spinach Lover's Day World Food Day	Good Nutrition Month National Fig Week National Split Pea Soup Week Thanksgiving	Christmas New Year's Eve

Seasonal Fruits and Vegetables

FALL	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER
September October November	December January February	March April May	June July August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples • Broccoli • Brussels Sprouts • Cabbage • Chinese Cabbage • Cauliflower • Celery Root • Chicory • Cranberries • Cucumbers • Dates • Eggplant • Fennel • Grapes • Greens • Lettuce: Head or Iceberg • Leaf Lettuce • Mushrooms • Nuts • Okra • Mandarin Oranges • Pears • Chili Peppers • Sweet Peppers • Persimmons • Pomegranates • Pumpkin • Quince • Shallots • Spinach • Winter Squash • Star Fruit • Sweet Potatoes • Turnips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avocados • Broccoli • Brussels Sprouts • Cabbage • Chinese Cabbage • Cauliflower • Celery Root • Chicory • Dates • Fennel • Grapefruit • Greens • Lemons • Wild Mushrooms • Mandarin Oranges • Sweet Oranges • Pears • Spinach • Sweet Potatoes • Tangerines • Turnips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asparagus • Avocados • Basil • Beans • Beets • Berries • Broccoli • Cabbage • Chinese Cabbage • Cucumbers • Lettuce: Head or Iceberg • Mangoes • Okra • Sweet Oranges • Papayas • Peas • Chili Peppers • Sweet Peppers • Radishes • Rhubarb • Shallots • Spinach • Summer Squash • Turnips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apricots • Basil • Beans • Beets • Blackberries • Blueberries • Boysenberries • Carrots • Cherries • Collards • Corn • Cucumbers • Dates • Figs • Grapes • Green Beans • Limes • Mangoes • Melons • Nectarines • Okra • Peaches • Pears • Chili Peppers • Sweet Peppers • Plums • Raspberries • Summer Squash • Tomatoes • Watermelon

Vegetable and Fruit Challenge

Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to identify various fruits and vegetables.
2. Students will be able to count the number of fruits and vegetables eaten at lunchtime.
3. Students will be able to record their progress on a chart.
4. Students will practice addition by adding up the number of servings daily, weekly and monthly.
5. Students will compare their personal and whole class progress with an identified goal.

How to Play:

- **Hang up the chart in the classroom.** The chart is printed on synthetic paper, which will wipe off clean. Have dry-erase markers readily available near the chart (the kind that write on and wipe off so that you can reuse the chart next year!). You can even Velcro the markers to the chart!
- **Set a classroom goal.** The goal is set by multiplying the number of school days in the month by the number of students in the class by 1.5 servings. For example, the month of February may have 15 school days and your classroom has 20 students. The formula would be as follows:

$$15 \text{ days} \times 20 \text{ students} \times 1.5 \text{ servings fruits \& vegetables} = 450$$

The 450 becomes your monthly goal for the students to reach on the chart.

- **After lunch each day, have the students come up to the chart** and make an X in the numbered boxes, putting one X for each fruit or vegetable eaten, one X per box. A taste is all that is necessary. Be sure to have students bringing lunches from home participate as well as those students purchasing school lunch. Notify parents of the challenge to encourage their support and participation.
- **Plan a special tasting party or offer small incentives to the students when the goal is reached.** These incentives may include pencils, stickers, magnets, special privileges, etc. Here is where your food service director may be able to assist you by preparing special items for the classroom or recognizing the students in the cafeteria. You may even want to post your results in the cafeteria for other classes to see the progress.
- **Tell Team Nutrition and Connecticut Team Nutrition about your challenge so we can feature your class on our Web sites!** www.fns.usda.gov/tn and www.team.uconn.edu.

Annual Marketing Calendar: Healthy School Meals

Define Promotion

Month	Theme	Food	Dates	Campus Events	Holidays
July					
August					
September					
October					
November					
December					
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					

Annual Marketing Calendar: Healthy School Meals

Publicize Promotion (Print)

Month	Banners/ Posters	Brochures	Flyers Invitations	Printed Menus	School Newsletter	Quiz	Newspaper	Tabletop Questions
July								
August								
September								
October								
November								
December								
January								
February								
March								
April								
May								
June								

Annual Marketing Calendar: Healthy School Meals

Publicize Promotion (Word of Mouth)

Annual Marketing Calendar: Healthy School Meals

Merchandising

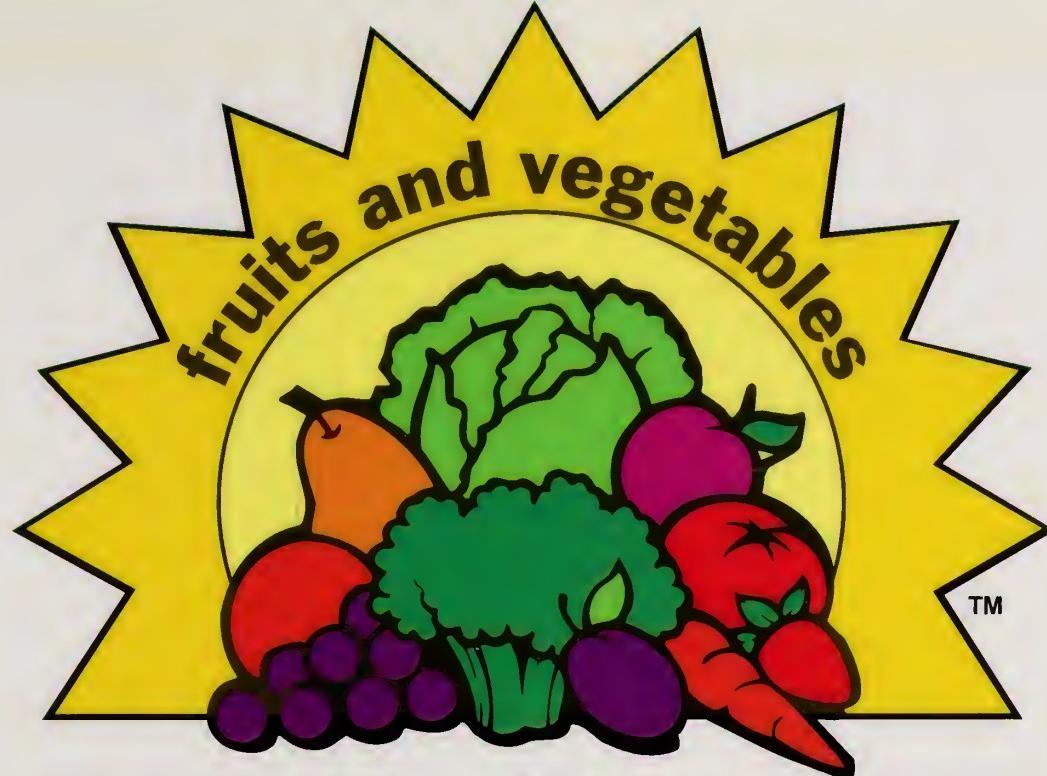
Prizes/Incentives

Month	Bulletin Board	Dress	Garnish	Menu Board	Place on Line	Book-marks	Buttons	Fanny Packs	Frisbees	Magnets
July										
August										
September										
October										
November										
December										
January										
February										
March										
April										
May										
June										

Annual Marketing Calendar: Healthy School Meals

Incentives to Offer

Month	Plastic Notepads	Water Bottles	Person Responsible
	Pencils	Stickers	T-Shirts
July			
August			
September			
October			
November			
December			
January			
February			
March			
April			
May			
June			



EAT 5 to 9 A DAY
for better health



EAT 5 to 9 A DAY
for better health



EAT 5 to 9 A DAY
for better health





Put a Rainbow
On Your Plate



2nd Day

2

Pick





Eat Your
Colors Today!



The Eat Right
Line
to Good Health

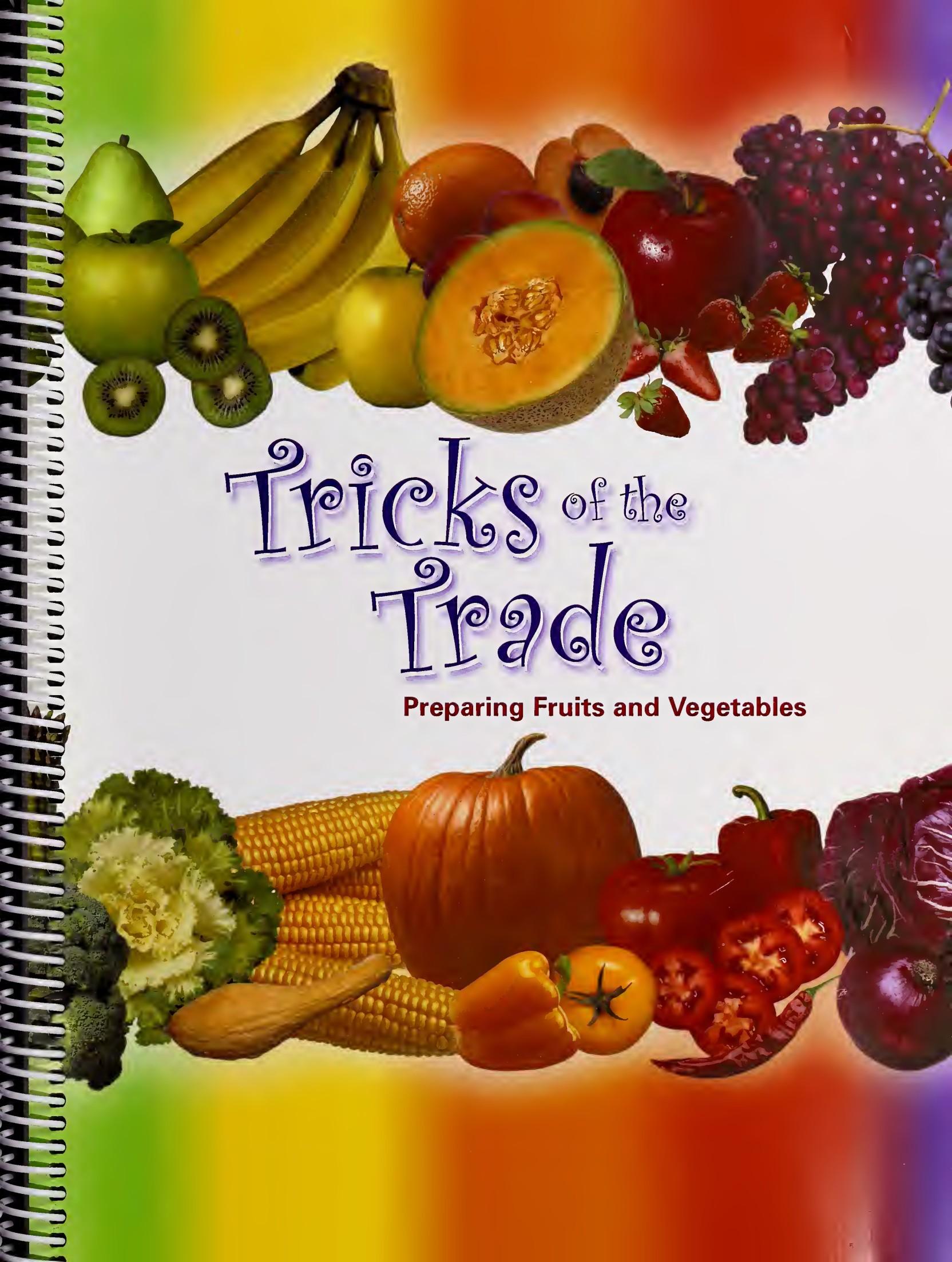
Eat your share.
There's lots
to share.







United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service
FNS-365
February 2004



Tricks of the Trade

Preparing Fruits and Vegetables



www.fns.usda.gov/tn

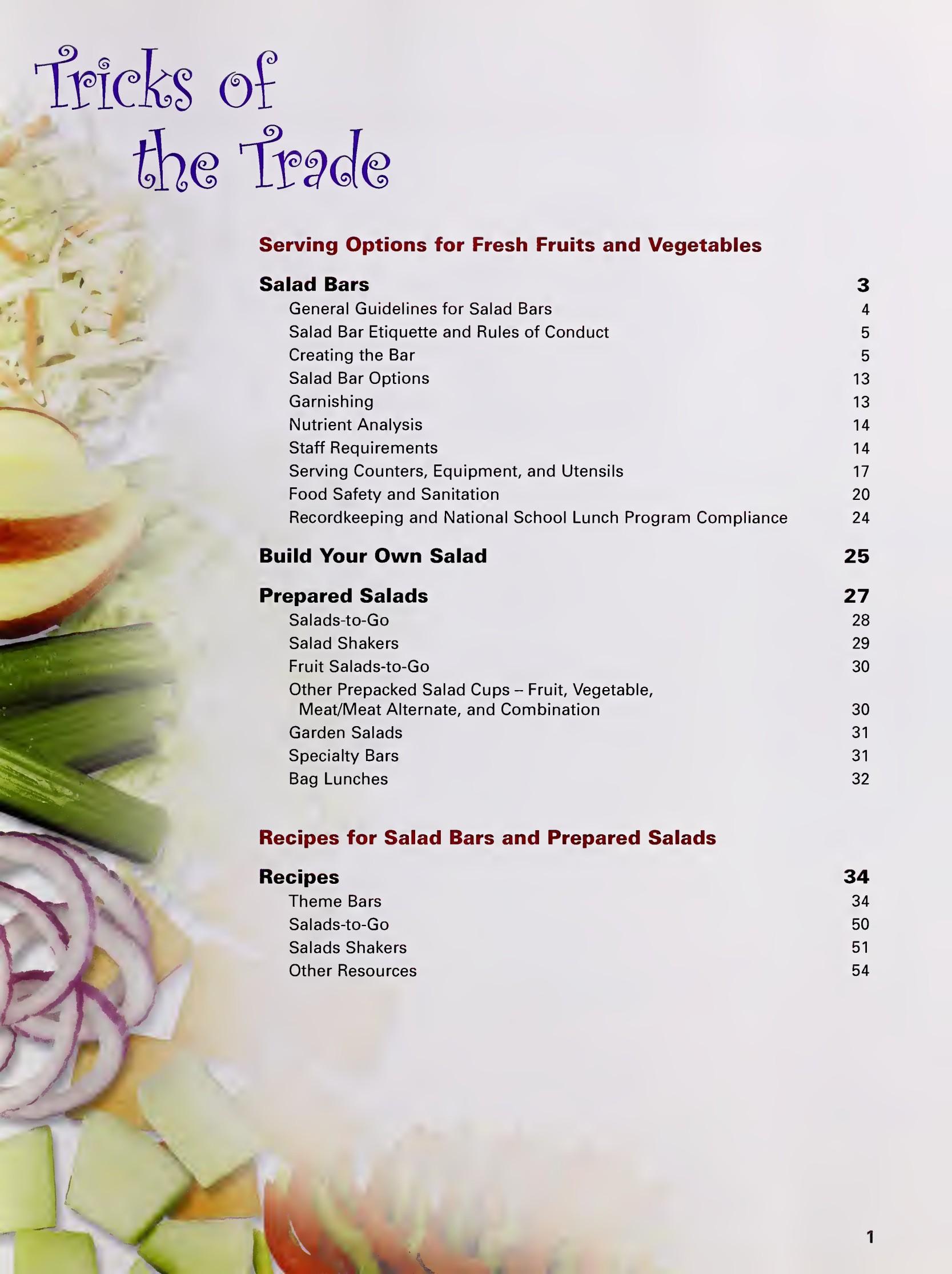
Source documents for Tricks of the Trade included:

- *Salad Bar Instructions 2001-2002*, Los Angles Unified School District, Ivy L. Marx, RD, Field Nutrition Specialist, LAUSD
- *Salad Bar Guide*, SYSCO Food Services of Portland, Inc.
- *Prepared with Pride*, Unit: Salads, Maryland State Department of Education, Nutrition and Transportation Services Branch, Stewart Eidell, Nutrition and Education Training Specialist
- *5 A Day the Color Way*, Pinellas County, 2002, Pinellas County, Florida School Food Service Staff, Dolores McCoy, Nutrition Specialist
- *Fresh-2-You The Florida Way*, Florida Departments of Education and Agriculture
- *Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals*, National Food Service Management Institute
- Equipment Efficiency for Healthy School Meals, Satellite Seminar, National Food Service Management Institute
- *Serving It Safe – A Manager's Tool Kit*, 1996, USDA, Food and Consumer Service, Publication Number FCS-295; Revised 2002, National Food Service Management Institute, Publication Number ET 38-02 (IG)
- *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*, 1998, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Publication Number FNS 303
- *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, 2002, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Publication Number PA 1331
- *A Guide for Purchasing Foodservice Equipment*, 1999, National Food Service Management Institute/USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Order Number NFSMI-R-35-98
- *The New Design Handbook for School Food Service*, 1997, National Food Service Management Institute, Publication Number EX 11-95
- Food Safety and Inspection Service Web site, www.fsis.usda.gov
- Eat Your Colors Every Day Salad Bar and Salad Options, Pinellas County, 2002, Pinellas County, Florida School Food Service Staff, Dolores McCoy, Nutrition Specialist and the Produce for Better Health Foundation

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Tricks of the Trade

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Salad Bars



Excitement!

A salad bar is a great way to add excitement to your lunch meals and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables. Children, even kindergarteners, love to create their own meal. They are more likely to eat unfamiliar foods if they can choose them.

Variety!

Add variety – the choice is yours:

- Typical salads, vegetables, and fruits
- Exotic, unusual ingredients
- Theme bars – ethnic or holiday themes
- Specialty food stations – taco, chili, potato, etc.

Success!

Success is measured in increased participation and customer satisfaction. To create success:

- Involve the customer.
- Have quality food preparation, appetizing presentation, and great service.
- Energetically market and merchandise your food and cafeteria.

Salad Bars

General Guidelines for Salad Bars

When you've decided on a salad bar, there are several steps to making sure it's a rousing success:

Inform

- Before opening the salad bar, meet with the following groups separately: school administration, faculty, school nurses, students, parents, custodial staff, and foodservice staff. Discuss the importance of eating fruits and vegetables, along with the health benefits; aims of the program; its unique benefits; and the importance of their support for students' acceptance of the salad bar. Other subjects that should be included are salad bar etiquette, ways to promote the salad bar, barriers that are unique to the school, their roles in monitoring safety and line speed, and the locations of the salad bars.



Train

- Train the foodservice staff on how to receive, store, and prepare the foods for the salad bar. Discuss how to maintain the salad bar for attractiveness and food safety, monitor the students' choices, take accurate meal counts, replenish food items, help students on the salad bar line, and generally ensure efficient operation of the salad bar. There should be initial and ongoing training. We have included a helpful publication on CD-ROM, *Culinary Techniques: Cooking Fruits, Salads, and Vegetables with Flair*. Developed by the National Food Service Management Institute, it contains interactive learning activities, glossary, recipes, video clips, activity index, and links to resources on the Web – all with a focus on maintaining food quality.

Advertise

- Advertise the salad bar menu, so students and staff know the day's delight.
- Post the menu in:
 - a visible area in the cafeteria
 - the kitchen
 - homeroom classes
 - teachers' lounges
- Announce the menu over the public address (PA) system and in the school bulletin.

Monitor

- Go back to school administration, faculty, students, and foodservice staff to obtain feedback on the salad bar.
- Track amounts of foods served to determine preferences, and make adjustments as necessary.
- Review the costs and benefits of the salad bar.
- Observe how the salad bar is maintained, and make improvements as needed.
- Check to ensure safety and quality of food.
- Check food temperatures and keep records.
- Keep food out of the danger zone (41 °F to 140 °F).

TIP:

**See Meal Appeal:
Attracting Customers
for other marketing
ideas.**



Salad Bar Etiquette and Rules of Conduct

Excite the students and adults about the salad bar, and they will come! Before each salad bar is rolled out, advertise and promote it heavily. Some excellent ways to bring attention to each "grand" salad bar opening are to speak at faculty staff and parent/teachers' meetings, make presentations at assemblies, and visit classrooms. Include salad bar etiquette in your presentations.

In one school district, school foodservice staff visited one class in each school and discussed salad bar etiquette. After several sessions, the class then performed a skit during a school assembly on how to "show good manners" at the salad bar. See "Salad Bar Etiquette" on the next page.

TIP:

Post the "Salad Bar Etiquette" list on the next page near the salad bar.

Creating the Bar

What kinds of salad bars are right for your school? Your choices will be guided by consideration of such factors as the age groups you serve, preparation facilities, food safety, and staffing. "Salad Bar Options," which begins on page 13, will help you clarify your ideas and stimulate you to try new ones. What is important is to stretch your imagination and resources to help your children enjoy more fruits and vegetables for better health.

Some possibilities are:

- Self-service vs. assisted service
- Salad bar incorporated into the serving line as a fruit and vegetable choice
- Salad bar as a reimbursable meal option on the serving line
- Free-standing salad bar outside the serving line as an add-on to the meal
- Free-standing salad bar as a separate reimbursable meal serving line with register
- Second or third serving line dedicated to salad bar and other fresh fruit and vegetable options



Menu Planning

Each school is different, and its students have different tastes. Whether you are planning menus for the salad bar or the regular serving line, the same principles apply. Create a menu that meets the tastes of your students by:

- Obtaining student input through student organizations such as the Nutrition Advisory Council (NAC). For information on NAC, visit the American School Food Service Association at www.asfsa.org/morethanschoolmeals/nac/.
- Obtaining staff input (from the foodservice employees, teachers, teacher assistants, school nurses, custodians, social workers, and administrators).
- Letting a student committee occasionally plan the menu for one day with advice and oversight from the school foodservice department.



Salad Bar Etiquette

- 1** Always wash your hands first.
- 2** Use utensils. NEVER USE YOUR FINGERS.
- 3** If a utensil or plate falls on the floor, don't put it back. Tell a cafeteria person.
- 4** Don't taste food items at the salad bar.
- 5** Take a small amount of new foods to try.
- 6** Take only what you can eat.
- 7** Don't bring food back to the salad bar.
- 8** DON'T PUT YOUR HEAD UNDER THE SNEEZE GUARD OR FOOD SHIELD. Ask a friend or a cafeteria person to help if you can't reach.
- 9** Always be polite in line. Wait your turn.
- 10** Always use a clean plate for seconds.

Menus should be planned for variety, nutrition, and acceptability.

Steps to successful menu planning are:

- Schedule a time to plan.
- Think about where you are and where you want to go. Determine a time period or number of days or weeks for which menus will be planned.
- Focus on the age or grade group(s) you want to serve.
- Decide the number of choices you will offer.
- Consider available labor, equipment, and facility design.
- Provide fluid milk choices for salad bars that offer complete reimbursable meals.
- Make sure you are meeting the nutrition goals.
- Evaluate what you have planned.
- Use cycle menus.

Basic menu planning principles are:

- Emphasize variety.
- Offer choices.
- Add contrast in texture, temperature, flavor, color, and shape.
- Consider eye appeal.
- Brighten with the vivid colors of fruits and vegetables.
- Use balance to achieve nutrient standards such as offering a low-fat food to balance a high-fat food.

Menu planning should address the following issues:

- Purpose, goals, and compliance requirements of the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- Specific menu planning system being used – Traditional, Enhanced, or Nutrient Standard Menu Planning
- Nutrition goals established by USDA's School Meals Initiative for Healthy School Meals
- Student food preferences
- Food costs and the availability of funds
- Availability of seasonable foods
- Availability and skill of personnel
- Kitchen layout and capacity of equipment
- Food preparation and work scheduling
- Creative food merchandising to enhance customer acceptance

Resource

A *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* is an excellent resource on how to plan, prepare, serve, and market healthy and appealing meals. Appendix 9 contains food sources of major nutrients. Order this resource from USDA's Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/NTISform.html.

TIP:

Menus should be planned to contrast color, flavor, texture, and shape. If it looks good, they might try it.



Salad Bars

Sample Salad Bar Menus

The salad bar menus below illustrate the large variety of fruit and vegetable items available. You can choose from these menus and adapt them to your food service.

There are endless choices of items for the salad bar. The following examples show just a few of the many interesting ways to combine fresh fruits and vegetables.

SAMPLE SALAD BAR MENU #1

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Salad Greens Cucumber Slices Cherry Tomatoes Bell Pepper Rings Beets	Salad Greens Shredded Carrots Broccoli Florets Zucchini Slices Pickled Okra	Salad Greens Cauliflower Florets Green Peas Tomato Wedges Cucumber Slices	Salad Greens Baby Carrots Garbanzo Beans Celery Sticks Sliced Tomatoes	Salad Greens Shredded Red/ Green Cabbage Broccoli Florets Whole-Kernel Corn Zucchini Coins
Raisins Orange Wedges Apple Wedges Strawberries	Peach/Pear Halves Banana Halves Grapes Pineapple Tidbits	Kiwi Halves Orange Wedges Honeydew Chunks Apple Wedges	Banana Halves Plums Cantaloupe Chunks	Grapes Orange Wedges Apple Wedges Watermelon Wedges
Chicken Salad Hard-Boiled Eggs (Shelled)	Cottage Cheese Julienne Turkey Garbanzo Beans	Egg Salad Cheese Cubes Yogurt	Diced Chicken Turkey Ham	Tuna Salad Beef Salami Slices Kidney Beans
Cheese Sticks Soft Pretzels Wheat Crackers Whole-Wheat Bread	Tortillas Graham Crackers Whole-Wheat Bread	Bagels Animal Crackers Whole-Wheat Dinner Roll Whole-Wheat Bread	Corn Bread Pretzel Rods Whole-Wheat Bread	Hawaiian Bread Vanilla Wafers Saltines Whole-Wheat Bread
Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk
Toppings: Croutons Mushrooms	Toppings: Salsa Shredded Cheese Cilantro	Toppings: Chinese Noodles Olives	Toppings: Trail Mix Jalapeño Peppers Radishes	Toppings: Dill Pickle Chips Diced Onions

Salad Bars

TIPS:

- For ease in menu planning, production, and service, you may want to use a base menu and offer some new food items every day. A good suggestion is to offer one-third new items, one-third convenient or prepared foods, and one-third repeat food items.
- The repeat food items could be your base menu. An example would be to offer salad greens, broccoli, carrots, and tomatoes every day. Then add variety by using other food items.
- Encourage children to “Mix and Match to Make Your Portion” or “Build Your Own Salad.”

SAMPLE SALAD BAR MENU #2

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Salad Greens Beet Rounds Carrot/Celery Sticks Cherry Tomatoes	Salad Greens Pickled Green Beans Cherry Tomatoes Whole-Kernel Corn	Salad Greens Broccoli Florets Tomato Slices Baby Carrots Cucumber/Green Pepper Rings	Salad Greens Cherry Tomatoes Celery Slices Zucchini/Yellow Squash Coins	Salad Greens Shredded Red/ Green Cabbage Tomato Salsa Whole-Kernel Corn
Trail Mix Grapes Peach Slices (Canned) Banana Halves	Raisins (Boxed) Strawberries Pineapple Chunks (Canned)	Gelatin with Diced Pears (Canned) Apples Watermelon Wedges	Kiwifruit Halves Mixed Fruit (Canned) Tangerines	Trail Mix Pear Wedges Melon Choice Orange Wedges
Cheese Cubes Hard-Cooked Egg Julienne Ham Peanut Butter Cups	Yogurt Shredded Cheese Diced Chicken Garbanzo Beans	Mozzarella Cheese Sticks Ham Cubes Tuna Salad	Cheese Cubes Diced Turkey Kidney Beans	Chicken Fajita Strips Cottage Cheese Shredded Cheddar Cheese
Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk
Toppings: Croutons Shredded Cheese Olives Trail Mix Jalapeño Peppers Radishes Yogurt				
Grain/Bread Choice				

Salad Bars

Ingredients To Consider for the Salad Bar

Greens:

Endive
Escarole
Lettuce varieties such as butterhead, iceberg, leaf, romaine
Fresh spinach
Red or green cabbage
Precut lettuce mix

Vegetables:

Asparagus, fresh* or canned
Beans – garbanzo, kidney, etc., cooked or canned
Beans – green, fresh* or canned
Beets, cooked or canned
Broccoli*
Carrots
Cauliflower
Celery
Cucumbers
Green peas, frozen (thawed) or canned
Jicama
Mushrooms
Onions, red and white
Peppers – green, red, & yellow
Radishes
Scallions
Squash, yellow
Sweet potato cubes, cooked
Tomatoes, cherry
Tomatoes
Water chestnuts, sliced, canned
Zucchini

** Blanching or lightly steaming these fresh vegetables before chilling will make the color more intense and may increase their acceptability.*

Fruits:

Melon varieties (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon, etc.)
Avocados
Apples
Bananas
Grapes
Kiwifruit
Oranges, fresh
Pears
Peaches
Pineapple
Plums
Strawberries
Tangerines
Trail mix
Canned fruit, all varieties – apple slices, applesauce, apricots, peaches, pears, pineapple, mixed fruit, Mandarin oranges
Frozen fruit – apple slices, blueberries, peaches, strawberries, melon balls
Dried fruit – raisins, cranberries, cherries, apples, apricots

Vegetable/Fruit Salads:

Cole slaw
Bean salad
Corn relish
Marinated vegetables (carrots, green beans, mushrooms, etc.)
Fruit salad
Waldorf salad
Potato salad
Squash salad
Green pea salad
Pickled beets

Salad Bars

Ingredients To Consider for the Salad Bar

Protein Items (Meat/meat alternate in the Food-Based Menu Planning approach or menu item in the Nutrient Standard Menu Planning approach):

Yogurt
Meats – turkey, tuna, chicken, ham, etc.
Meat salads
Cheeses – grated, sticks, cubes, slices
String cheese
Cottage cheese
Hard-cooked eggs
Taco filling
Nuts – almonds, walnuts, peanuts, pecans, etc.
Nut butters – almond, peanut, sesame, etc.
Toasted sunflower and sesame seeds
Cooked dried peas and beans

Grain/Bread Items:

Bread varieties, croutons, crackers, pita, tortillas, etc.
Chow mein noodles
Pasta and pasta salad
Rice and rice salad

Other Items:

Variety of salad dressings, lowfat and regular
Pickles
Olives – black and green
Salsa
Lowfat sour cream
Guacamole
Imitation bacon bits
Flavored gelatin cubes
Jalapeño peppers
Pickled okra
Soups, variety – This would create a soup and salad bar. Provisions must be made to keep the soup hot and off the cold area of the bar.

Sample salad bar set-ups #1 and #2 are designed for two portable salad bars. The flaps on each end are used and a combination of full pans, half long pans, half pans, and third pans are used to create an interesting layout.

Sample Salad Bar Set Up #1

Start Line 1													End Line 1
stacks of plates or trays	spinach or combo of spinach and iceberg	baby carrot	broccoli florets	corn or zucchini cubes	topping jalapeños topping salsa topping garbanzo beans	orange slices	basket of tortillas	Basket of crackers	kiwi halves	melon chunks	turkey slices or tuna salad	hard boiled eggs salad dressing salad dressing	salad dressing napkin, sporkette

Point of service (POS) must be at the end of the salad bar after all components have been offered.

You may use a table off to the side for dressing. If homemade, put on ice.

Place milk service at the end.

Salad Bars

Sample Salad Bar Set Up #2

Start Line 2

End Line 2

stacks of plates or trays	romaine lettuce or combo of iceberg and health salad mix	cauliflower florets or cucumber slices	spinach or cherry tomato	green peas celery sticks	topping chowmein noodles topping shredded cheese topping radishes	basket of dinner rolls	Basket of crackers	grapes or raisins	banana halves	strawberries	egg salad or chicken salad	peanut butter	napkin, sporkette
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Point of service (POS) must be at the end of the salad bar after all components have been offered.

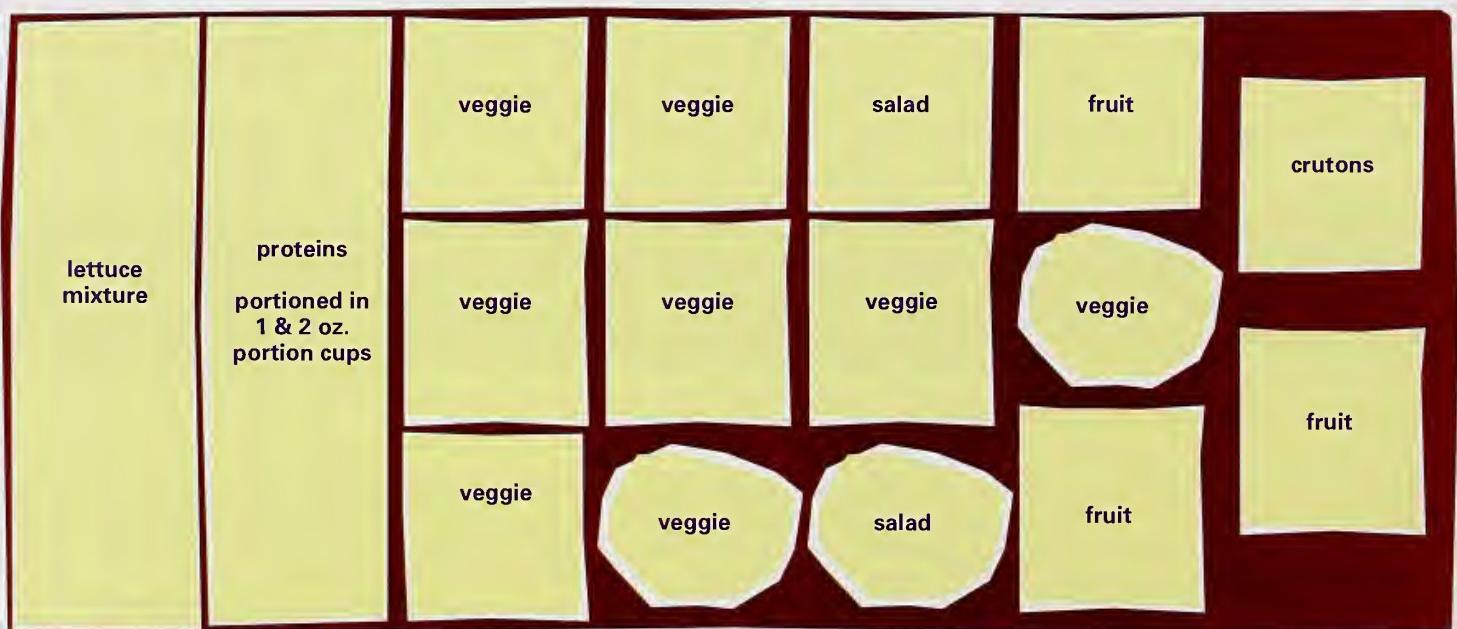
You may use a table off to the side for dressing. If homemade, put on ice.

Place milk service at the end.

Sample Salad Bar Set Up #3

Start Line 3

End Line 3



Salad Bar choices:

- 8 vegetables
- 3 fruits
- 2 cold salads
- Croutons
- Bread/roll/or crackers (2 pkg. = 1 bread)
- Provide a minimum of 2 proteins each day.

Salad dressings can be school made, or commercial. Please keep school made dressings on ice.



Salad Bars

Salad Bar Options

Specialty bars can expand your cafeteria and make it a fun and ever-changing place for your customers to dine and increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables. Specialty bars can offer full reimbursable meals or components to them, as well as accompaniments to hot-food-line items such as burgers, tacos, pasta, or chili. Incorporate your own ideas and suggestions into the following bars, or design a whole new salad bar.

Theme Bars

Here are some possibilities for exciting theme bars taken from *Fresh-2-U The Florida Way*, recently developed by the Florida Departments of Education and Agriculture. Recipes and layout diagrams for all of these begin on page 33:

- Build a Better Burger Salad Bar
- Build a Bowl of Chili Salad Bar
- Greater Tater 'N' Salad Bar
- Pile a Pizza Salad Bar
- Plenty O' Pasta Salad Bar
- Stuff a Submarine Salad Bar
- Top a Taco Salad Bar



Garnishing

Customers eat with their eyes. Food in school cafeterias should be fresh and colorful, be presented attractively, and taste good. This will encourage students to try it.

Garnishing the salad bar will improve the appearance of the food and stimulate the desire for food. Garnishing helps draw attention to foods that students may not normally choose.



Salad Bars

TIP:

Your imagination is your only limit in making salad bars attractive and compelling.

See the *Meal Appeal – Attracting Customers* booklet for ideas on enhancing your salad bar.



Rules for garnishing the salad bar:

- Use inexpensive, easily and quickly prepared garnishes.
- Don't overgarnish.
- Use a garnish that will enhance the food.

Some suggestions for garnishing the salad bar:

- Fresh kale – This is popular because of its deep green color and durability. This can be used to trim the salad bar and fill up empty spaces. It can be washed and reused, and will last about 1 week.
- Replica kale – This is a plastic product that has the same appeal that the fresh kale has. It is more costly than the fresh product but can be washed and reused many times.
- Leaf lettuce, parsley, red or Napa cabbage – While these items are not as durable as kale, they can be used to trim the salad bar while offering color and eye appeal
- Baskets or arrangements of fresh fruits and vegetables enhance any salad bar.

Nutrient Analysis

Salad bars can serve as the complete reimbursable lunch or as a food/menu item that is a part of a reimbursable meal. To conduct a nutrient analysis of the menus, as required by USDA's Healthy School Meals Initiative regulations, it is helpful to develop a standardized recipe for the salad bar. Consult your State agency for information on this procedure.

Staff Requirements

Factors to consider when planning for staffing of the salad bar are:

- the menu
- the number of students that participate
- the forms of food that are purchased and prepared, such as value added (pre-cut) lettuce versus bulk lettuce that needs processing
- kinds of equipment
- facility design and layout
- staff expertise and training

At a minimum, the number of staff should be two people to prepare the salad bar and two people (they can be the same people) to monitor the salad bar during the meal service. The number may increase based on the factors listed above.

In small schools with 350 or fewer students, one person should be able to handle salad bar responsibilities.

Designated employees must be trained to prepare the salad bar foods (washing, chopping, cutting, etc.), as well as to maintain and monitor the salad bar during meal service.

Salad Bars



Duties and Responsibilities of Staff

Cashier

The cashier is stationed at the point of service (POS) to ensure an accurate count of students receiving reimbursable meals by using such counting methods as swiping computerized meal cards or collecting meal tickets. The POS must be located in a place after all the required meal components for the salad bar have been offered.

Responsibilities:

1. Counts meals served by category (Free, Reduced, or Paid).
2. Checks meal compliance to ensure students take the required number of food items for the food-based or the nutrient standard menu planning options.
3. Verifies that the portion size taken for the component is as planned.
4. Asks a student to return to the salad bar for additional food if the cashier identifies that the student's plate does not meet requirements.
5. May collect cash.

Replenisher or Monitor

Responsibilities:

1. Keeps the salad bar clean, and monitors food temperatures.
2. Replenishes items, never allowing any to run out.
3. Makes sure there is adequate backup of items before service begins, and knows the appropriate substitutions for foods on the salad bar.
4. Monitors how much food students are taking, and encourages students to take only what they will eat. This helps ensure no one is taking too much of any item, possibly causing a shortage of certain items.

Salad Bars

5. Encourages students to try a variety of menu items.
6. Makes sure all students are following safe food practices and proper salad bar etiquette, such as using serving utensils on the salad bar and not eating at the salad bar. (See Salad Bar Etiquette on page 6.)
7. Helps students make choices without slowing the service line.
8. Evaluates line speed, customer acceptance of food items, and service issues; and helps cafeteria manager develop solutions to barriers to a successful salad bar.

Volunteers (Parents and Students) and Non-Foodservice Staff

(only if allowed by school district policies)



ALL VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF MUST BE TRAINED IN FOOD SAFETY AND SANITATION.

Suggested Responsibilities:

1. Keep the salad bar area neat and clean throughout service.
2. Inform replenishing person when supply of an item is getting low.
3. Assist younger students with plates and tableware.
4. Keep the lines on the salad bar organized.
5. Control the number of students allowed at the salad bar to prevent congestion.
6. Make sure all students are following safe food practices and proper salad bar etiquette, such as using serving utensils on the salad bar and not eating at the salad bar.
7. Help decorate the salad bar area with posters.



Salad Bars



A good choice of counter for lower elementary grades might be a 28-inch model, plastic, nonrefrigerated, mobile, with folding detachable tray slides, and accessible from both sides.

Serving Counters, Equipment, and Utensils

When considering different types of salad bars, determine your needs. Consider the following in making your decisions:

- How much room do you have for the bar? It can be part of the regular serving line or be placed to the side. It can provide a reimbursable meal by itself.
- Where will you position the bar for optimal traffic flow and marketing? If it's part of the reimbursable serving line, placing it at the beginning will promote the fresh fruits and vegetables most successfully.
- Where will the equipment and cashier be for point-of-service count?
- Does it need electrical outlets (floor or drop-down from ceiling)?
- Will it have good lighting (important for showcasing fresh fruits and vegetables)?
- Can you procure other space for the bar or will you have to reposition your current equipment?
- Will you need to purchase an expandable bar for the future?
- Is refrigerated storage nearby?
- Do you need to move the bar from the floor into the kitchen each night?
- Are there multiple uses for the bar – breakfast, lunch, afterschool snacks, school events?
- Do you need a low bar, with the appropriate protective devices, for students in the lower elementary grades? The required height of the sneeze guard varies with the student population, which means that using the same equipment for high schools and elementary schools probably will not be possible.
- How many units do you need per school?
- How many students will choose the salad bar? Usually, during the startup phase of a salad bar it is very popular, but the participation rate may slow down later.

TIPS:

Finding space:

If you are using disposables, you can convert the dish room you are not using into a salad bar area. Or some of the à la carte space could be used for the salad bar.

Counters:

Consult with foodservice equipment vendors for variations in types and configurations.

Salad Bars

Traffic Flow

TRAFFIC FLOW is a key element to the success of your salad bar. There are three basic patterns:

- **Single Line:** This is an easy pattern to set up and is easy for the user. It can be placed against the wall.
- **Two-Sided Line:** This allows for faster service but has certain space and pattern flow restrictions. For faster service, place matching foods on either side of the bar.
- **Free-Standing:** The major advantage is that it can be placed in a prominent position away from the serving line and wall, which helps to spotlight it. This allows for many creative and dramatic displays. It can be a single line or two-sided bar. If a power source were needed, electrical lines would have to be dropped from the ceiling unless there is an appropriate outlet in the floor.

TIP:

- **Use 6-inch-deep, full-size steam-table pans (12" x 20") as liner pans to hold ice if units are not refrigerated.**

Equipment To Keep Foods Chilled

Three general methods for keeping foods chilled on the salad bar **are:**

- **Ice chilled:** This is the least costly but requires daily maintenance. Ice is placed in serving pans or other containers on the bar, and the food containers are placed in the ice. Ice should be the same depth as the food in the containers. The positive aspects are: 1) less expensive initial equipment and 2) the fresh appeal to customers of having food items displayed in ice. A major consideration is getting access to a sanitary source of ice. If this is not possible, then this type of salad bar should not be used.

TIPS:

- Showcase the salad bar by locating it near a high-traffic entrance.
- Place it in full view in a well-lighted area.
- Plan traffic patterns to prevent crossing meal lines for service or dish return.
- Provide traffic control by placing ropes, chains, or other methods to mark off areas for students to form lines.
- Provide clear, large, attractive signs to designate each food line.
- If the salad bar line offers a reimbursable meal, keep the register or computer close to ensure that an accurate point-of-service count of reimbursable meals can be taken.

- **Frost top:** This has refrigerated piping running underneath the top surface. This provides a more maintenance-free and cost-effective setup than the ice-chilled bar. However, spilled items will freeze and stick to the chilled surface. There must be access to an electrical outlet.
- **Chilled:** Items are kept cold by blowing air over a refrigerated coil in a compressor located in the bottom of the unit. This is the most costly type of salad bar to operate. Many of these units come in detachable sections, which can be removed and repositioned to create different salad bar displays. This type also needs access to an electrical outlet.

Utensils and Containers

Serving Utensils

Serving utensils include tongs, scoops, portion servers (solid or perforated measuring-serving spoons that are volume-standardized), and ladles. They are fairly dependable measures for portioning food by volume and for serving food quickly.



Always replace used serving utensils with clean, unused serving utensils when replenishing food. Have all spaces filled on the salad bar.

REMEMBER:

- Serving utensils should match their use.
- For items such as lettuce, use tongs; for items that need to be drained, such as beans and beets, use slotted measuring-serving spoons.
- Small dry ingredients, such as croutons and bacon bits, require a spoon.
- Pickles and fruit slices are best served with tongs.
- Always use long-handled utensils to prevent the utensils from sliding into the food.

Refer to Appendix page 78 for information on serving utensils. For additional information, refer to USDA's *The Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, Revised 2000, pp. I-43 to I-45.



Salad Bars

Always use a new pan or container when you replace food. Never replenish food directly into the pan or container that is currently on the salad bar.

BE AWARE that students who receive free and reduced-price benefits can choose either size of salad without any extra cost.

Salad Bar Food Containers

Containers should be easy to remove and easy to clean. Some examples of food containers are:

- Steamtable pans with straight sides, either stainless steel or hard plastic. Full-size may be used, but the smaller 1/3 or 1/4 sizes are preferable because pans will be replaced more often. More foods can be offered on the salad bar, and the food will be fresher.
- Crock
- Plastic food containers, such as round plastic bowls
- Wooden baskets for whole fresh fruit, breads, and individually packed items
- Salad dressing containers
- Specialty soup containers, such as kettles. Soups and other hot foods must not be kept on the salad bar (cold foods only) but rather held in a different area that will keep these foods hot.

Individual Serving Containers for Customers

There are many types of serving containers. These can be bowls or platters made of Styrofoam or plastic, as well as plastic dinner plates and cafeteria trays. Novelty containers, such as shakers and boats, are also available.

Providing two different sizes of plates or bowls at different prices will give options to the customers.

Food Safety and Sanitation

Food safety and sanitation must be the main emphasis when operating a salad bar. A salad bar should be clean, and contain safe food items, to attract and keep students' participation. A poorly maintained salad bar will cause students to avoid it.

Operating a safe and attractive salad bar begins with preparation and ends with cleanup and storage of ingredients.



Preparation

- Thoroughly wash fruits and vegetables with potable running water – never in standing water, because dirt and microorganisms that are rinsed off one item can then spread to the next.
- Designate special knives and cutting boards for cutting fresh fruits and vegetables only. Doing so helps prevent cross-contamination, which is the spread of germs from one item to another.
- Wear gloves or thoroughly wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds in warm water before handling salad bar items directly. If using gloves, make sure that you have not touched anything but the food items. Change gloves if you change activities or the gloves become soiled. **Remember, the gloves are to protect the food, not your hands.**
- Use proper cooking, cooling, and storage temperatures. Maintain temperatures for cold foods below 41 °F, and above 140 °F for hot foods. **KEEP COLD FOOD COLD AND HOT FOOD HOT.**



Setup

- Protect food on display with sneeze guards or food shields that meet the local health standards. Keep them clean. These shields should be about 14 to 18 inches above the food and in a direct line between the food and the mouth or nose of the customer. Always check what the correct height is for children.
- Use at least one long-handled serving utensil for each food item. Long handles prevent the utensil from slipping into the food items.
- If ice is used as the chilling medium, it must be produced in a sanitary ice machine. Use ice scoops to remove ice from the machine. Ice scoops must have long handles and be stored in a sanitizing solution between use.
- Set up the salad bar close to meal service time to prevent perishables from sitting out longer than necessary.
- Discourage tasting or grazing in the service line by identifying all foods on display. Label containers, post clear signs on the food shield, and write the names of salad dressings on the ladle handles or on dressing containers or dispensers. You can order ladles with the names of the salad dressings on the handles.
- Keep foods cold by not filling to the brim and storing to a depth of the ice.
- Keep dry condiments away from moist foods.
- On self-serve food bars, prepackaged fresh vegetables and fruits are more sanitary, with a reduced risk of cross-contamination from customers.



Salad Bars

Individuals working on the salad bar should wear hair restraints, clean aprons or smocks, and gloves.



Maintenance and Cleanup

- Individuals working on the salad bar should wear hair restraints, clean aprons or smocks, and gloves.
- Cover all food items on the salad bar before meal service begins and in between service if there is a long period of time between lunch periods.
- Do not let prepared items sit at room temperature; keep cold foods cold, and hot foods hot.
- Keep all perishable backup foods refrigerated. Do not bring them out until the supply on the salad bar needs replenishing.
- Properly cover, label, date, and refrigerate backup items so they can be used within the allowable time.
- Replenish often with containers of fresh ingredients. Do not add fresh food to the containers on the bar.
- Date stored food, and use First In, First Out (FIFO) to ensure the freshest quality.
- Immediately remove contaminated food from the salad bar. An example of how contamination can occur is when a child tastes food and returns this food to the container on the salad bar.
- Keep all surface areas clean. Employees should quickly clean up any spills.
- **Store wiping cloths in the proper sanitizing solution at the proper concentration at all times.** Discard sanitizing solution after optimal holding time. Follow manufacturer's instructions for dilution and holding time.
- Monitor students to ensure they do not reach into food containers with their hands, drop handles of serving utensils into the food, taste food and return it to the serving containers, etc.
- At the end of the serving period, discard any unused potentially hazardous food items that were left on the salad bar and not prepackaged.
- Wash and sanitize the salad bar after each use.

Salad Bars

Temperature Control

- The temperature range of 41 °F to 140 °F is called the “danger zone” because dangerous microorganisms can grow quickly in this temperature range, possibly resulting in serious foodborne illnesses.

Note:

The new Supplement to the FDA 2001 Food Code revises the hot holding temperature from 140 °F to 135 °F. “Fruits & Vegetables Galore” maintains the prior minimum standard of 140 °F for hot holding.

- The salad bar must maintain temperatures for cold foods below 41 °F and above 140 °F for hot foods . **KEEP COLD FOOD COLD AND HOT FOOD HOT.**
- Potentially hazardous foods, such as fresh-cut melons, must be kept out of the “temperature danger zone.”
- Check and record the temperatures of potentially hazardous foods (log) immediately upon removing from the refrigerator or cooler and before placing on the salad bar.
- It is recommended to check the temperatures every 30 minutes after these foods are placed on the salad bar.
- School Food Authorities should establish policies and procedures on how to handle food that is found to be within the danger zone (41 °F to 140 °F), based on local health inspection requirements.



Resources

- Serving It Safe: A Manager’s Tool Kit* is an excellent training resource on food safety and sanitation. It provides specific information such as temperature guidelines for safely receiving, storing, and preparing food, handling leftovers, etc.
- Food Safety: It’s In Your Hands*. This 2-hour satellite teleconference videotape addresses issues relating to food safety and the prevention of foodborne illness including identifying food safety hazards, avoiding cross-contamination, personal hygiene, and hand washing.
- Food and Drug Administration Food Code, 2001 Edition*



The first two resources above are available from the National Food Service Management Institute. Contact the Institute at 800-321-3054 or visit the Web site at www.nfsmi.org to order these resources if you do not already have them.

Salad Bars

Record Keeping and National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Compliance

Food Production Record for Salad Bars

If the salad bar is a separate serving line, the food production record must document that reimbursable meals were offered. Other pertinent information as required by regulations must be included. Contact your State agency for prototype forms. Also refer to the resource, *A Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals*, to find examples of food production records. You may order a copy of this publication online from the Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn.

Compliance With NSLP Regulations

In order for salad bar meals to be reimbursable under the NSLP, they have to meet the same meal pattern requirements as other served meals. See pp. 63 to 66 for "Planning Menus and Serving Meals that Meet Meal Pattern Requirements."



Suggestions to help the cashier recognize a reimbursable meal from a salad bar are:

- Plan consistent portions of similar foods.
- Know the planned portion sizes.
- Proportion some foods.
- Use portion control serving utensils.
- Display sample portions for students and cashier.
- If the salad bar is planned as the entrée, the menu planner must determine what is the portion size of the salad (entrée), such as 1 cup of salad.
- Educate students and adults.

In some schools, various sizes of plates or bowls are offered as options at different prices. BE AWARE that students who receive free and reduced-price meal benefits can choose either size salad without any extra cost. Meal counting procedures must ensure that there is no overt identification of these students.

Build Your Own Salad

An alternative to the typical self-serve salad bar is an option developed by Pinellas County, Florida, as part of a pilot project sponsored by the Produce for Better Health Foundation. Their “Build Your Own Salad” bar offers portioned choices that are individually packaged to ensure food safety but provide students a range of choices to build their own salad. Students have at least 4 choices each of 1/4-cup portioned vegetables and fruits (may choose any combination of 4), a portioned salad cup (may choose 1), 4 varieties of 1-oz. portioned proteins (may choose 2), bread, and milk.



Build Your Own Salad

Vegetable packages include broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumber, endive, mushrooms, onion, green pepper, radishes, spinach, romaine lettuce, squash, tomatoes, and zucchini.

Fruit packages include fruits in season – apple, banana, pear, orange, peach, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, strawberries, grapes, watermelon, nectarine, commodity canned fruits, commodity frozen fruits, raisins, and trail mix.

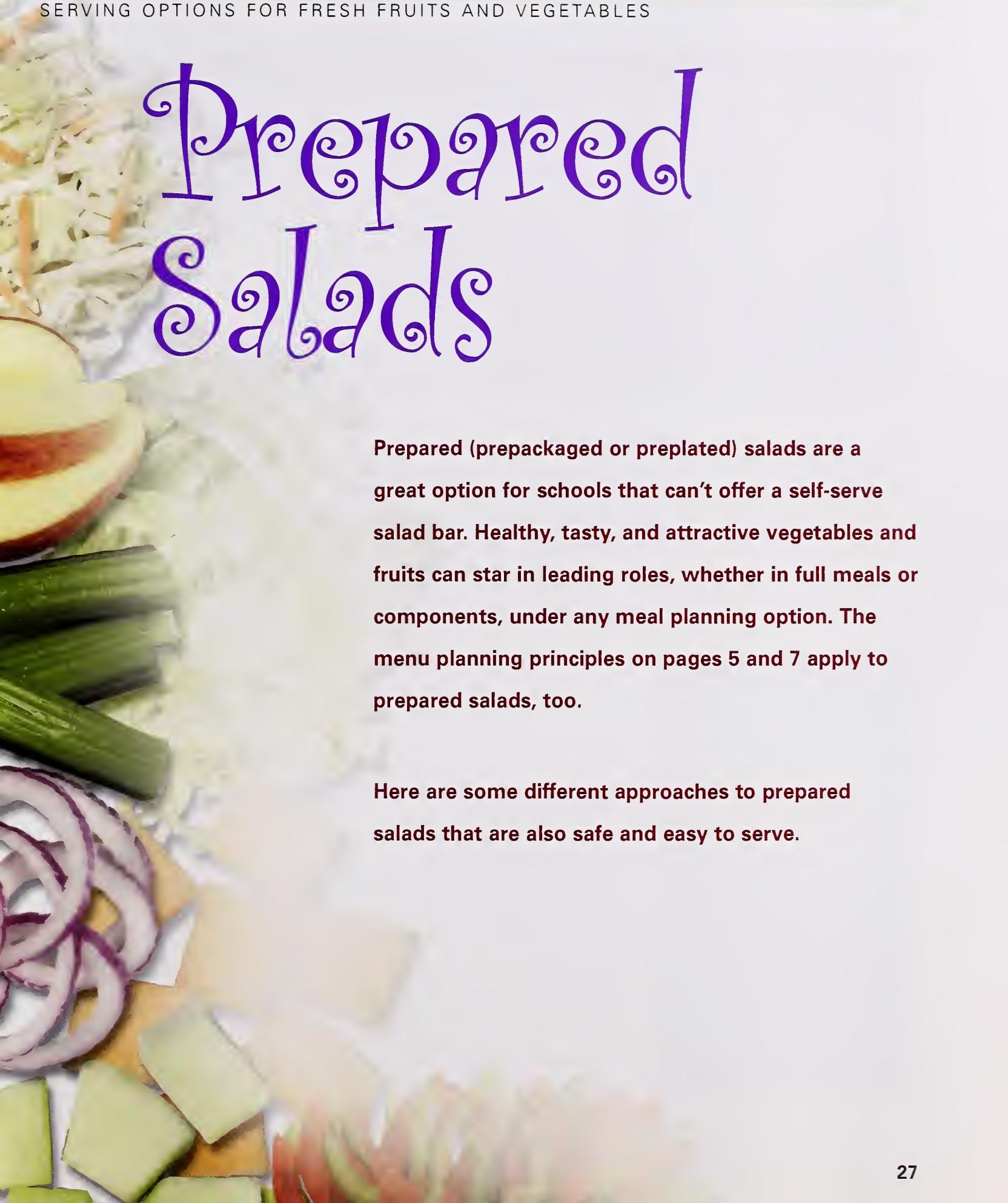


Vegetables and fruits are prepared for the salad bar, weighed, and prepackaged into 1/4 cup servings. Pinellas County used 3- x 5-inch clear Ziploc bags for its pilot, but other packaging options are available. This option lets the students select the individual items they want in their salad while ensuring the safety and sanitation of those items. However, it is more labor intensive than the regular salad bar or prepared salads.

Presentation will make a big difference in selling prepackaged ingredients. Part of the challenge is to showcase the natural appeal of the fruits and vegetables, allowing the rich colors of each to shine through the packaging. Clear soufflé cups and clear tops are more transparent than plastic bags. Good lighting is a must. Dressing and garnishing the bar attractively will draw your customers' eyes and appetites. As with all fruits and vegetables, if "Build Your Own" salads are part of the reimbursable serving line, placing them at the beginning of the line will promote their selection.



Prepared Salads



Prepared (prepackaged or preplated) salads are a great option for schools that can't offer a self-serve salad bar. Healthy, tasty, and attractive vegetables and fruits can star in leading roles, whether in full meals or components, under any meal planning option. The menu planning principles on pages 5 and 7 apply to prepared salads, too.

Here are some different approaches to prepared salads that are also safe and easy to serve.

Prepared Salads



Salads-to-Go

A “salad-to-go” is a fresh prepackaged salad meal for a quick grab-and-go lunch. It is a full meal that helps customers in a hurry pick a well-balanced, lowfat item that, when combined with a bread and lowfat milk, provides a reimbursable meal for the Food-Based Menu Planning approach. These prepackaged salads can be the entree or a side dish when using the Nutrient Standard Menu Planning approach. Salads-to-go can be offered outside the regular service line at a kiosk or at the *á la carte* window to better serve customers.

Here are some ideas for prepackaged salad meals. Recipes for the following begin on page 46:

- **Chef's Salad-to-Go**
- **Spinach Salad-to-Go**
- **Chicken Taco Salad-to-Go**
- **Chicken Topper-to-Go**
- **TunaTopper-to-Go**
- **Turkey Salad-to-Go**

Guidelines for salads-to-go:

- Use colored trays for salad or fruit soufflé cups or 2-inch clear steamtable pans in a refrigerated unit (single layer).
- Do not stack trays; place trays next to each other.
- Use plastic platters or bowls with lids for salads.
- Cut fresh cauliflower and broccoli into 1-inch florets.
- Cut fresh green, yellow, and red peppers into rings, not strips.
- Slice zucchini and yellow squash.
- Refrigerate vegetables after cutting.
- Place packets of salad dressing on the serving line in wicker baskets.

Prepared Salads

- Refrigerate salads-to-go and serve as an entrée, that includes 2 fruit/vegetable components and a meat/meat alternate (1 to 2 oz. as required); offer a bread serving (or 8 individual crackers) and milk to count as a reimbursable meal for the food-based menu planning option.
- Do not use lettuce that has turned brown or wilted.
- Do not use metal pans for service.
- When serving leftover cauliflower, trim brown spots.
- Peel carrots before cutting for salads.



Salad Shakers

A salad shaker is a fresh prepackaged salad meal where dressing can be added to the container and shaken together for a quick grab-and-go lunch. Salad shakers can be full reimbursable meals when enough meat/meat alternate is provided and when milk and bread are offered with the meal for food-based menu planning approaches. They are a quick and healthy alternative to a hot meal when students are in a hurry. They also reflect products your customers see in the restaurants they enjoy. Recipes for the following begin on page 51:

- Greek Salad Shaker
- Chicken Caesar Salad Shaker
- Caesar Salad Shaker
- Oriental Chicken Salad Shaker
- Southwest Chicken Salad Shaker

Guidelines for Salad Shakers

- Use clear, soft plastic 12 to 16-oz. cups with clear domed lids without holes.
- Place shakers upright in a refrigerated unit with the contents visible to customers.
- Wash and rinse vegetables before preparing salad shakers.
- Package with individual packets of salad dressing, or place the packets on the serving line in wicker or decorative baskets.



Prepared Salads

Fruit Salads-to-Go

Offering fresh fruits in an attractive and appealing manner will encourage your customers to choose a nutritious selection to accompany their main entrée.

- Use colored trays for fruit soufflé cups or a 2-inch steamtable pan in a refrigerated unit (single layer).
- Do not stack trays; place trays next to each other.
- Use 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups with lids for canned fruits. Use 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids for fresh fruit.
 - Use a colored tray for bananas.
 - Use a 3/8-cup measuring-serving spoon or #10 scoop (3/8 cup) for canned fruit. (See appendix page 78)
 - Serve apples, oranges, plums, and peaches whole, or 3/8 cup of grapes (approximately 14 seedless grapes).
 - Keep cut apples or bananas from turning brown by dipping in 1 cup of lemon or lime juice or pineapple juice (drained from canned pineapple).
 - For a colorful fruit alternative, place together a half apple and a half orange and serve in a soufflé cup. The orange prevents the apple from discoloring.
 - Do not use metal pans for serving fresh fruit.
- Try serving fresh whole fruits in a wicker basket for an attractive serving alternative.



Other Prepacked Salad Cups – Fruit, Vegetable, Meat/Meat Alternate, and Combination



- If smaller individual servings of fruits and vegetables are preferred to the meals-to-go, try alternatives such as fruit cups, vegetable cups, cottage cheese cups with fruits or vegetables, cheese cubes and fruit cups, yogurt and fruit cups, and other fruit and vegetable combinations for a new twist on getting your 5 A Day.
- Use 5-oz. clear plastic soufflé cups with lids to package individual fruit and vegetable servings.
- When offering more than one serving choice for fruits and vegetables, keep like-colored items separated. Instead, line different-colored items next to each other. For example, place strawberries next to pears or carrots next to celery.
- Do not place fruit cocktail next to pears – both have a yellow tint and minimize the attention given to each choice.
- Combining meat or meat alternates with fruits and/or vegetables offers customers fresh choices for breakfast, lunch, or an afterschool snack.

Prepared Salads

Garden Salads

A simple garden salad – without meat, egg, or cheese – can be a standard offering in your meal program. Stack them two-deep in a 4-inch pan on your regular line or on specialty lines. Offer 2-oz. portions of three different salad dressings in 2-1/2-oz. plastic soufflé cups stacked two-high in a 4-inch pan, or 2-oz. individual packets in three 1/3 pans. Garden salads must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.

Garden Salad-to-Go

2	cups lettuce	2	small broccoli florets
4	tomato wedges (use 1/2 tomato)	3-4	carrot sticks
2	slices cucumber	1	pitted black olive
1	radish, sliced		

1. Place lettuce pieces in a 20-oz. clear plastic container with a lid.
2. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
3. Overlap two cucumber slices in the center of the container.
4. Arrange the radish slices on each side of the tomato wedges.
5. Place the two broccoli florets on the left and right side of the container.
6. Top with carrot sticks.
7. Place black olive in the center.

Specialty Bars

Examples of specialty bars are:

- **Sandwich bars**
- **Salad and sandwich bars**
- **Salad and soup bars**
- **Salad, soup, and sandwich bars**

Provide fresh fruits and vegetables, canned fruits, and preplated salads as choices on the specialty bars. Vegetable soups that are tasty and “chock-a-block” with vegetables should be “stars” when part of a specialty bar.



Fruits and vegetables can become featured items on an à la carte line. By using the many tips and suggestions throughout this publication, you can encourage your customers to purchase these fruits and vegetables.

Prepared Salads

Bag Lunches

Bag lunches may be used for field trips, picnics, or other special occasions. This is a way that your school cafeteria can meet your customers' needs even off campus.

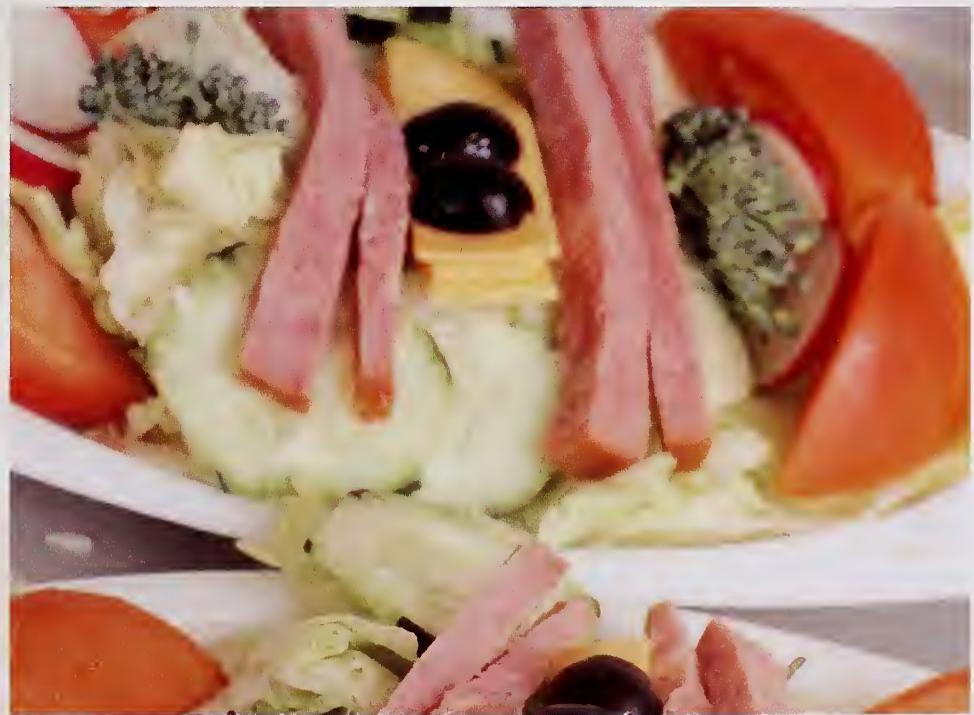
- A reimbursable bag lunch may include a sandwich, milk, and two vegetable/fruit components.
- When refrigeration or coolers are available, serve a different sandwich on each occasion: ham and cheese, sliced turkey, cheese, submarine sandwiches, bunned hamburgers.
- When refrigeration or coolers are **not** available, prepare peanut butter triple-deckers or cheese sandwiches with individual packets of mustard and mayonnaise.
- Include carrot, celery, zucchini, and yellow squash sticks with individual packets of dressing; or fill sandwich bags or 4-oz. soufflé cups with chopped raw vegetables, perhaps broccoli or cauliflower, with individual packets of dressing.
- Serve a variety of fruits in season, juice, or bags of raisins.
- Milk must be offered to each student.
- For treats, serve cookies or peanuts in a bag.
- Condiments for sandwiches can include individual packets of mustard or mayonnaise, bags of three or four pickle slices, or a dill spear (1/6 of a pickle).
- For special occasions or trips, elementary students can decorate the bags in advance. A good nutrition education project might be for them to draw their favorite fruit and vegetable choices on their bags.
- Colorfully printed bags or boxes for lunches may be purchased as an alternative to the brown bag. A prize, such as school stickers or cafeteria coupons, can be included in the box or bag.



RECIPES FOR SALAD BARS AND PREPARED SALADS

Recipes

for Salad Bars and
Prepared Salads



Build a Better Burger Salad Bar



1. Provide customer with a burger for topping.
2. Vegetables such as green peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, and onions should be sliced for this salad bar.



lettuce	sliced green peppers	sliced mushrooms	carrots	dressing
	sliced green peppers	sliced tomatoes	pickles	dressing
	lowfat shredded cheese	sliced cucumbers	bacon bits	dressing



Build a Bowl of Chili Salad Bar



1. Provide customer with a bowl of chili for topping.
2. Chop green peppers, onions, and tomatoes for this salad bar.

lettuce	chopped green peppers	chopped onions	corn relish	dressing
	coleslaw	chopped tomatoes	sliced mushrooms	dressing
	lowfat shredded cheese	taco chips	bacon bits	dressing



Greater Tater 'n' Salad Bar

1. Provide customer with a baked potato for topping.
2. Chop fresh onions and tomatoes for this salad bar.
3. Lightly steam fresh broccoli florets.



lettuce	bacon bits	chopped onions	sliced mushrooms	dressing
	parmesan cheese	chopped tomatoes	lowfat shredded cheese	dressing
	kidney beans	lowfat sour cream	steamed broccoli	dressing



Pile a Pizza Salad Bar



1. Provide customer with a slice of cheese pizza for topping
2. Chop fresh tomatoes and green peppers for this salad bar.



lettuce	chopped green peppers	chopped onions	corn relish	dressing
	coleslaw	chopped tomatoes	sliced mushrooms	dressing
	lowfat shredded cheese	taco chips	bacon bits	dressing



Plenty O' Pasta Salad Bar

1. Provide customer with a bowl of pasta for topping.
2. Fresh vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower, and zucchini should be served raw or very lightly steamed.



lettuce	cherry tomatoes	chopped onions	broccoli	dressing
	carrots	peas	cauli-flower	dressing
	sliced mushrooms	lowfat shredded cheese	zucchini	dressing
lettuce	cherry tomatoes	chopped onions	broccoli	dressing
	carrots	peas	cauli-flower	dressing
	sliced mushrooms	lowfat shredded cheese	zucchini	dressing



Stuff a Submarine Salad Bar

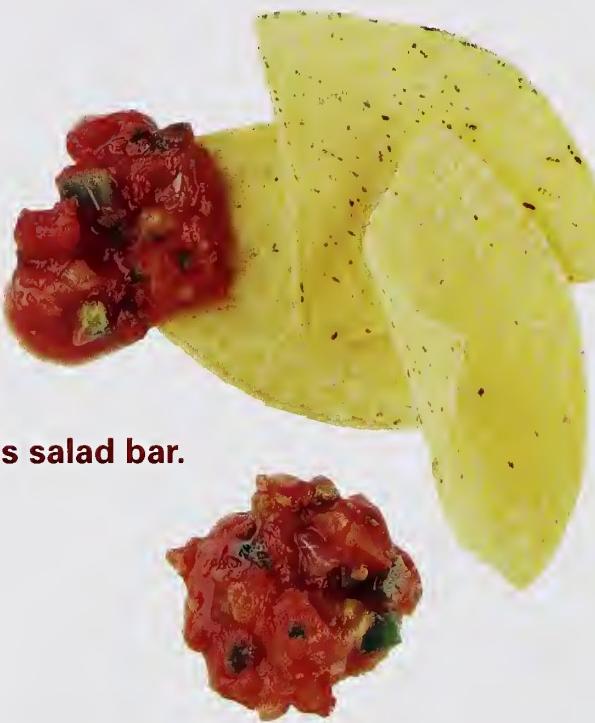
1. Provide customer with a submarine sandwich for topping.
2. Slice fresh green peppers, onions and tomatoes for this salad bar.



Recipes-Theme Bars

Top a Taco Salad Bar

1. Provide customer with a filled taco shell for topping.
2. Chop fresh onions and tomatoes for this salad bar.

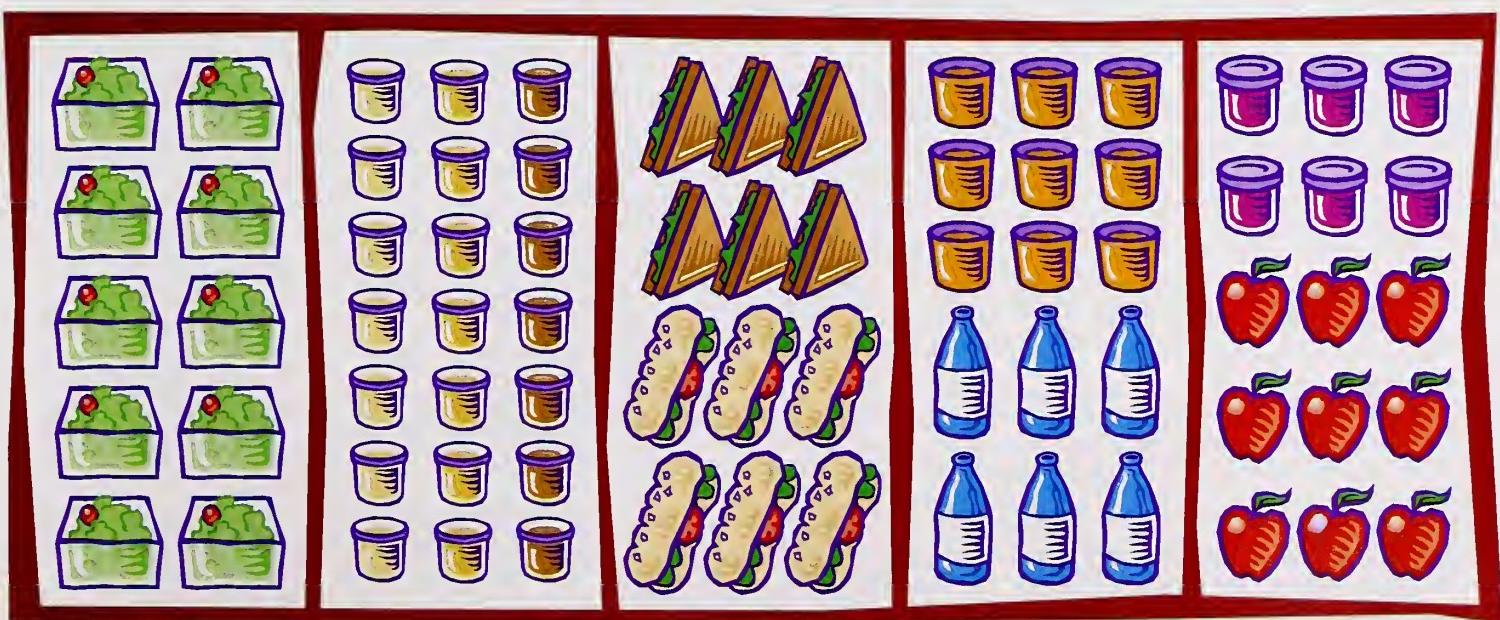


lettuce	guacamole	chopped onions	bacon bits	dressing
	lowfat sour cream	chopped tomatoes	sliced mushrooms	dressing
	salsa	taco chips	lowfat shredded cheese	dressing
dressing				

Á La Carte Bar

Guidelines for Á la carte Bar

1. Stack garden salads two deep in a 4-inch pan.
2. Offer 2-oz. portions of three different salad dressings in 2-1/2-oz. soufflé cups with lids, stacked two deep in a 4-inch pan, or place individual portion packs in three 1/3 pans.
3. Wrap sandwiches and subs in clear plastic wrap or package in clear containers. Serve in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch pans.
4. Serve yogurt, mineral water, and fruit in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in a 2-inch pan.
5. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices.
6. Serve fresh fruit and canned fruit in 4-oz. soufflé cups with lids.
7. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch clear pans.
8. All foods must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.



**Garden
Salads**

**Three
Dressings**

**Subs and
Sandwiches**

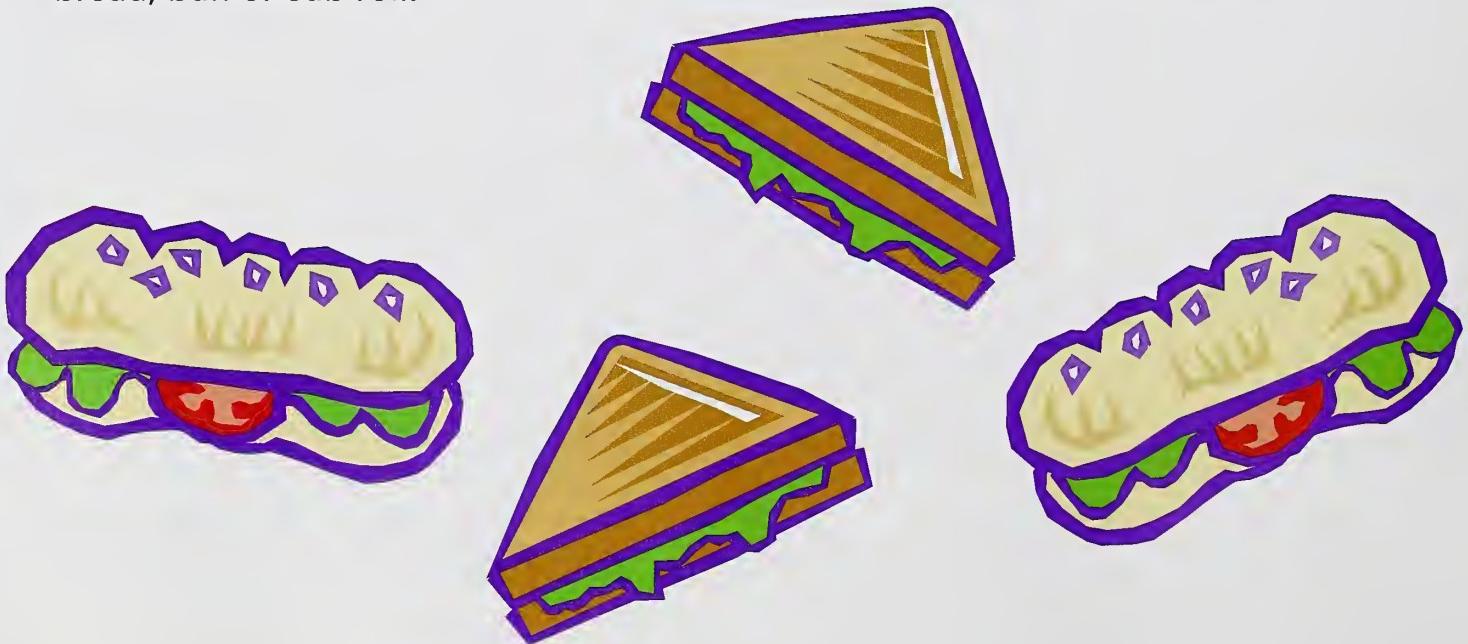
**Yogurt and
Fruit Juice**

**Canned and
Fresh Fruit**

Tips to Remember for Your Sandwich Bar

Sandwich Bars offer your customers a grab-and-go lunch with a variety of sandwich and fruit choices. Here are options for different types of sandwich bars to keep your customers happy.

1. Cut sandwiches diagonally, and stack halves together to show the contents.
2. Wrap cold sandwiches in clear plastic film to allow customers to see what they are purchasing.
3. Garnish sandwiches; use shredded lettuce and/or tomato slices and/or pickle slices on subs; and a lettuce leaf on loaf bread sandwiches.
4. Shave meats wafer thin, and mound on bread, bun or sub roll.
5. Display wrapped sandwiches in a 2-inch clear pan, 16 sandwiches per pan.
6. Sandwiches made with eggs, meat or cheese must be served in refrigerated units or over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners).
7. For variety, sandwiches may be pre-made on 2-foot-long French bread and sold in 2-inch cuts or larger. Sandwiches should be sliced when ordered—so the sandwich is “custom ordered.”



Sandwich Bar

Guidelines for Sandwich Bar

1. Wrap sandwiches and submarines in clear plastic wrap, or package in clear containers. Serve sandwiches in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in pans.
2. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices daily.
3. Serve canned fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups with lids.
4. Serve fresh fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids.
5. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch clear pans.
6. All food must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.



Sandwiches

Subs

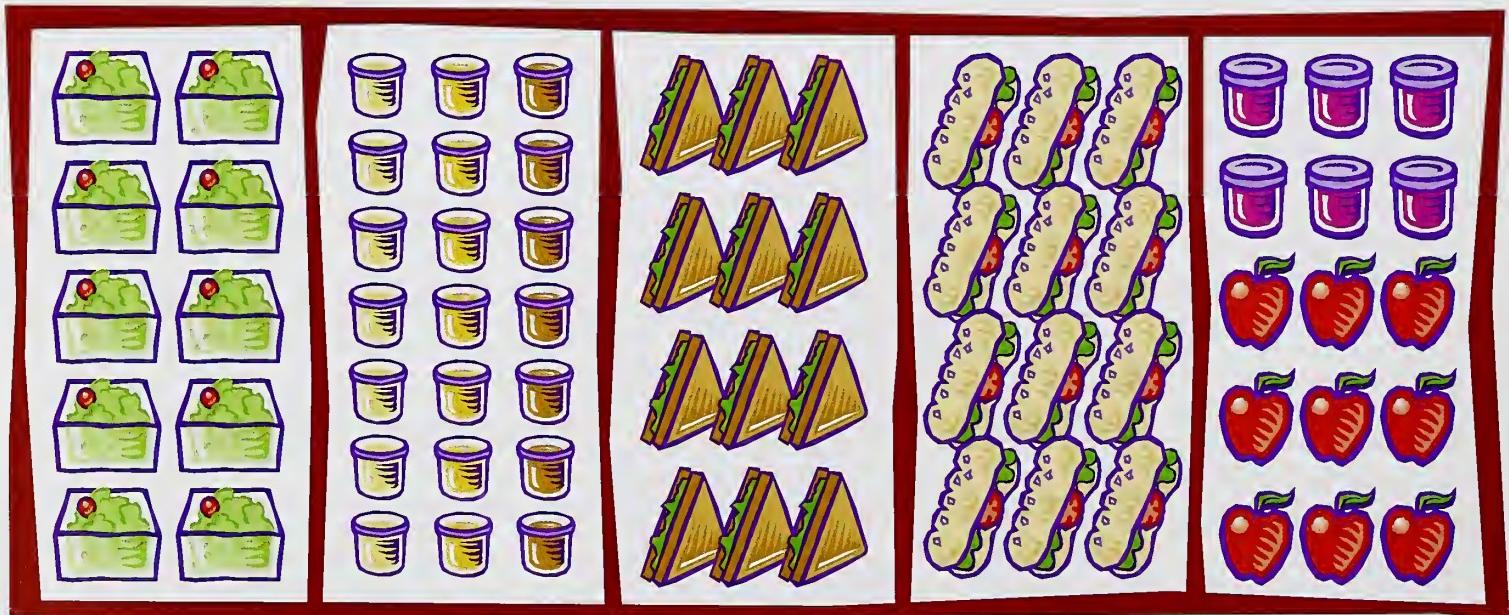
Canned Fruit

Fresh Fruit

Salad & Sandwich Bar

Guidelines for Salad & Sandwich Bar

1. Stack garden salads two deep in a 4-inch pan.
2. Offer 2-oz. portions of three different salad dressings in 2-1/2-oz. soufflé cups with lids. Stack two deep in a 4-inch pan or place individual portion packs in three 1/3 pans.
3. Wrap sandwiches and subs in clear plastic wrap, or package in clear containers. Serve in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch pans.
4. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices.
5. Serve canned fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids.
6. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in 2-inch pan.
7. All food must be kept over ice (using 6-inch pans as liners) or in a refrigerated unit.



Garden
Salads

Dressings

Sandwiches

Subs

Canned and
Fresh Fruit

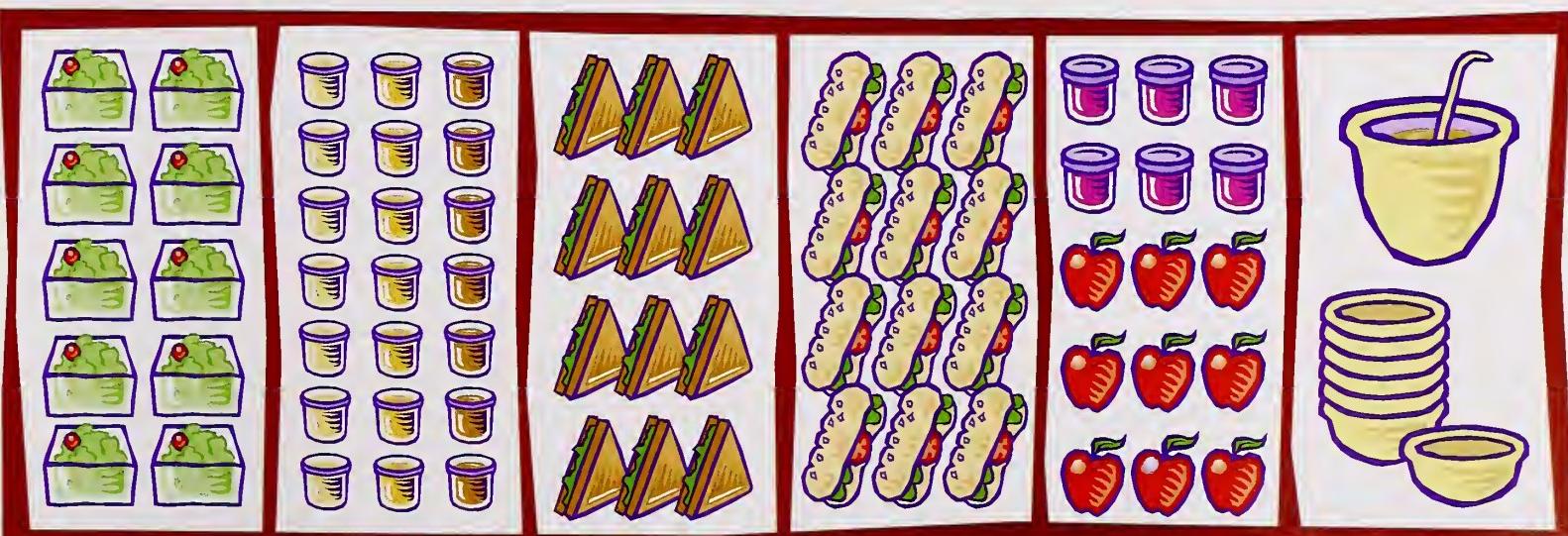
Soup, Sandwich, & Salad Bar

Guidelines for Soup, Sandwich, & Salad Bar

1. Follow guidelines for Sandwich Bar or Salad & Sandwich Bar.
2. Use an 8-oz. ladle to serve soup. Add one can of water to each #3 can (51 oz.) of soup.

For 8 oz. of soup to contain the required 1/4 cup vegetables, the following soups require the addition of 3 cups of vegetables to each #3 can (51 oz.) nonvegetable reconstituted soup:
 Chicken Gumbo, Chicken Noodle,
 Chicken with Rice, New England Clam Chowder, Cream of Celery, Cream of Chicken, and Cream of Mushroom.

3. Offer at least two fresh fruit choices.
4. Serve canned fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cup with lids.
5. Serve fresh fruit in 4-oz. plastic soufflé cups without lids.
6. Serve fruits in a single layer (do not stack more than one deep) in a 2-inch clear pan.



**Garden
Salads**

Dressings

Sandwiches

Subs

**Canned and
Fresh Fruit**

Soup Table

Recipes—Salads-to-Go



Chef's Salad-to-Go

2 cups lettuce
4 tomato wedges (use 1/2 tomato)
4 slices cucumber
1 radish, sliced
2 small broccoli florets
2/3 oz. ham (cut in 3" long 1/2" wide julienne strips)
2/3 oz. turkey (cut in 3" long 1/2" wide julienne strips)
2/3 oz. cheese (cut in 3" long 1/2" wide julienne strips)
1 pitted black olive

1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
2. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
3. Overlap two cucumber slices at the top of the container and the bottom.
4. Arrange radish slices on each side of the tomato wedges.
5. Place two broccoli florets on the left and right sides of the container.
6. Top with strips of ham, turkey, and cheese arranged diagonally in the center.
7. Place black olive in the center of the meat strips.



Spinach Salad-to-Go

2 cups spinach
1 hard-boiled egg, quartered
3/4 oz. slices of rolled ham
1/2 oz. cheese in 3-inch julienne strips
1 mushroom, sliced
2 cherry tomatoes

1. Place spinach pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
2. Place an egg wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
3. Place one ham roll diagonally in the center.
4. Place cheese strips diagonally on each side of the ham.
5. Arrange mushroom slices on the spinach.
6. Place a cherry tomato on each side of the container.

Recipes—Salads-to-Go



Chicken Taco Salad-to-Go

2 cups lettuce
tortilla chips
1/4 cup kidney beans (1/2 oz. protein)
1/2 oz. shredded cheddar
1 oz. pulled chicken pieces
1/2 tomato, diced
1 oz. salsa in a soufflé cup

1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
2. Spread tortilla chips on top.
3. Top with kidney beans.
4. Top with shredded cheddar.
5. Top with pulled chicken.
6. Top with diced tomato.
7. Place a soufflé cup with salsa in the center.

Layer in this order:

1. Lettuce
2. Tortilla Chips
3. Kidney Beans
4. Shredded Cheese
5. Pulled Chicken
6. Diced Tomato

Chicken Topper-to-Go

2 cups lettuce
1 #8 scoop chicken salad
4 tomato wedges (1/2 tomato)
1 green pepper ring (cut in half)
1 radish, sliced
2 small broccoli florets

1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
2. Place a #8 scoop of chicken salad in the center.
3. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
4. Place a half of a green pepper ring on each side of the chicken salad.
5. Arrange sliced radishes on the lettuce.
6. Place the broccoli florets on the left and right sides of the container.

Recipes—Salads-to-Go



Tuna Topper-to-Go

2 cups lettuce
1 #8 scoop tuna salad
4 tomato wedges (1/2 tomato)
1 green pepper ring (cut in half)
1 radish, sliced
2 small broccoli florets

1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
2. Place a #8 scoop of tuna salad in the center.
3. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
4. Place a half of a green pepper ring on each side of the tuna salad.
5. Arrange sliced radishes on the lettuce.
6. Place the broccoli florets on the left and right sides of the container.

Turkey Salad-to-Go

2 cups lettuce
3/4 oz. turkey (2 rolled slices or equivalent shredded turkey)
1/2 oz. cheese in 3-inch julienne strips
4 tomato wedges
1 radish, sliced
2 cucumber slices
2 small broccoli florets
1 pitted black olive

1. Place lettuce pieces in a clear plastic container with lid.
2. Place a tomato wedge diagonally in each of the four corners.
3. Place turkey diagonally in the center.
4. Place cheese strips diagonally in the center.
5. Arrange radish slices on each side of the tomato wedges.
6. Place a cucumber slice on the left and right sides of the container.
7. Place a broccoli floret on top of each cucumber slice.
8. Place a black olive in the center of the turkey.

Recipes—Salads-to-Go

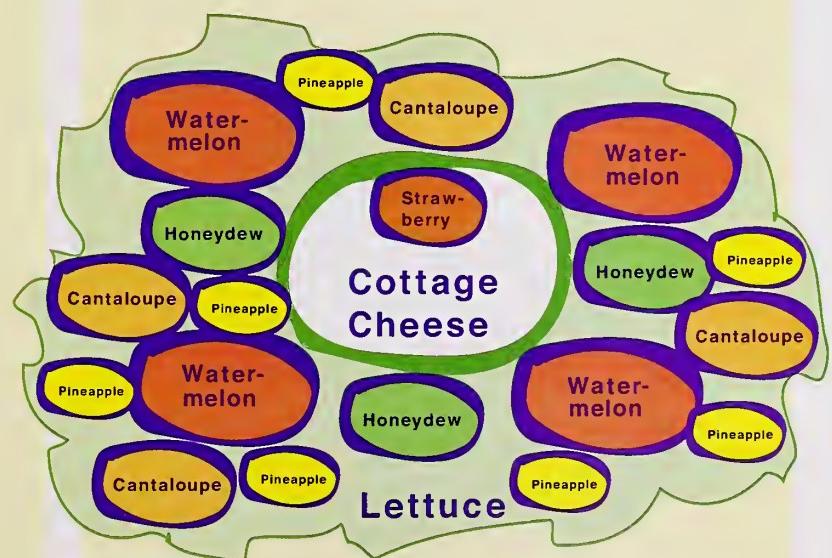
Checklist for Salads-to-Go

American Cheese
Black Olives
Broccoli
Cantaloupe
Carrots
Celery
Cheddar Cheese
Cherry Tomatoes
Cottage Cheese
Cucumber
Eggs
Green Pepper
Honeydew
Kidney Beans
Lettuce
Mayonnaise
Mushrooms
Onions
Pickle Relish
Pineapple Chunks
Pulled Chicken
Pullman Ham
Radishes
Salsa
Spinach
Strawberries
Tomato
Tortilla Chips
Tuna
Turkey Roll
Watermelon

The Fruit Salad Bowl-to-Go

1/2 cup (#8 scoop) lowfat cottage cheese in a 4-oz. plastic soufflé cup
1 cup lettuce
4-5 1-inch chunks of cantaloupe
4-5 1-inch chunks of honeydew
4-5 1-inch chunks of watermelon
4-5 1-inch chunks of pineapple
1 strawberry with stem

1. Place cottage cheese in a soufflé cup in the center of the container.
2. Place lettuce pieces around the cottage cheese cup.
3. Place fruit on lettuce.
4. Place strawberry in the center of the cottage cheese.



Recipes—Salads-To-Go

Fresh 2 U Tips to Remember for Your Fruit Salads-To-Go

Offering fresh fruits in an attractive and appetizing manner will encourage your customers to choose a nutritious selection to accompany their main entree.

1. Use colored trays for fruit soufflé cups or a two-inch steam table pan in a refrigerated unit (single layer).
2. Do not stack trays; place only one tray at a time.
3. Use 4 oz. plastic soufflé cups with lids for canned fruits. Use 4 oz. unlidded plastic soufflé cups for fresh fruit.
4. Use a colored tray for bananas.
5. Use a 3/8 cup spoodle or #10 scoop (3/8 cup) for canned fruit.
6. Wash fresh fruits in dish machine in a silverware rack with no heat or soap.
7. Serve apples, oranges, plums and peaches whole, or 3/8 cup of grapes (approx. 14 seedless grapes).
8. Keep cut apples or bananas from turning brown by dipping in one cup of lemon or lime juice or pineapple juice (drained) from canned pineapple.
9. For a colorful fruit alternative, place together a half apple and a half orange and serve in a soufflé cup. The orange prevents the apple from discoloring.
10. Don't use metal pans for serving fresh fruit.
11. Try serving fresh whole fruits in a wicker basket for an attractive serving alternative.



Fresh 2 U Salad Shakers

Salad shakers are a fresh pre-packaged salad meal where dressing can be added to the container and shaken together for a quick grab-and-go lunch. Salad shakers can be full reimbursable meals when enough meat/meat alternate is provided and when milk and bread are offered with the meal. They provide a quick and healthy alternative to a hot meal when students are in a hurry.

Fresh 2 U Vegetable Tips for Your Salad Shakers

1. Use clear soft plastic 12-16 ounce cups with clear domed lids without holes.
2. Place shakers upright in a refrigerated unit with the contents visible to customers.
3. Wash and rinse vegetables before preparing salad shakers.
4. Package with small individual packets of salad dressings or place individual packets on the serving line in wicker or decorative baskets.
5. Refrigerate salad shakers and serve as an entrée, including two fruit/vegetable components and 2-3 ounces meat/meat alternate component; offer milk and a bread serving (8 individual crackers or 1/2 cup croutons) for a reimbursable meal.

Greek Salad Shaker

1 1/2	cup salad lettuce mix
2	ounces Feta cheese
1/8	cup diced tomatoes
1/8	cup black or Greek olives
2	fresh red onion rings
1/4	cup croutons
1	package Vinaigrette dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add Feta cheese, diced tomatoes, olives, red onion rings, and croutons.
3. Place individual packet of Vinaigrette dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Recipes—Salads Shakers



Chicken Caesar Salad Shaker

1 1/2 cup romaine lettuce
2 ounces diced cooked chicken
1 ounce grated Parmesan cheese
1/8 cup diced tomatoes
1/4 cup croutons
1 package Caesar dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add diced cooked chicken, diced tomatoes, grated Parmesan cheese, and croutons.
3. Place individual packet of Caesar dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Caesar Salad Shaker

1 1/2 cup romaine lettuce
2 ounces grated Parmesan cheese
1/8 cup diced tomatoes
1/4 cup croutons
1 package Caesar dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add diced tomatoes, grated Parmesan cheese, and croutons.
3. Place individual packet of Caesar dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Recipes—Salads Shakers

Oriental Chicken Salad Shaker

1 1/2 cup salad lettuce mix
2 ounces diced cooked chicken
1/8 cup mandarin oranges
1/4 cup Chinese noodles
1/8 cup diced chives
1 package Oriental dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add diced cooked chicken, mandarin oranges, Chinese noodles, and chives.
3. Place individual packet of Oriental dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.



Southwest Chicken Salad Shaker

1 1/2 cup romaine lettuce
2 ounces diced cooked chicken
1/8 cup diced tomatoes
1/4 cup black or garbonzo beans
2 tablespoon corn relish
1/4 cup sliced tortilla strips
1 package Southwest dressing

1. Place lettuce pieces into clear plastic 12 or 16 ounce cup.
2. Add diced cooked chicken, diced tomatoes, beans, corn relish, and tortilla strips.
3. Place individual packet of Southwest dressing into clear dome lid and place lid tightly on clear cup.

Corn Relish

1 #10 can corn, drained
2 tomatoes, whole, diced
1 onion, large, diced
1 green pepper, diced
1 cucumber, diced
5 celery stalks, diced
1 tablespoon celery seed
taste salt and pepper
1 cup vegetable oil
1-1/2 cups vinegar

Directions: Mix ingredients with vinegar and oil, chill and serve.

Yield: 30 3/8 cup servings.

Recipes—Other Sources

Other Resources

Other recipes for salad bar items – standardized to help you maintain quality and consistency – are available in the following USDA publications:

- **Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals:** Download this resource from USDA's Team Nutrition Web site at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Training/train.html>; or send a request to teamnutrition@fns.usda.gov, or call Team Nutrition at 703-305-1624.
- **School Lunch Challenge Recipes:** Download the recipes from USDA's Team Nutrition Healthy School Meals Resource System Web site at <http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov/Chef/recipechallenges.html>.
- **Quantity Recipes for School Food Service:** Purchase by calling the National Food Service Management Institute at 1-800-321-3054.

Quality, Quality, Quality!

A quality product at the end of preparation does not guarantee a quality product on the plate. Careful attention to quality and safety procedures during serving ensures an end-product that your customers will want to eat and can enjoy safely.



Quality, Quality, Quality!



Quality Down the Line and On the Line

Once your school accepts a food product that fulfills the established specifications, it is up to you to maintain its quality and safety.

Now the stage is set for you, the School Foodservice Staff, to handle each step of the process with impeccable standards, practices, and procedures in order to preserve, present, and serve a quality meal your customers can safely enjoy.

Your task to "seal in" quality and safety and to creatively present nutritious meals that customers like and want more of is a tall order! To entice students to try food brings your creativity to a whole new level-- thinking "outside the pan" if you will.

For best quality and safety:

- Keep certain fresh fruits and vegetables that are considered potentially hazardous foods, such as fresh-cut melons, below 41 °F.
- Serve only ingredients that are clean, drained, chilled, and crisp.
- **ALWAYS** evaluate salad items and prepared salads before placing on the serving line to ensure that the foods are tasty, attractive, and have been held at the correct temperatures. Evaluation standards could include:
 - Color should be bright with no discoloring due to overripeness.
 - Skins should be shiny.
 - Skins should be free of bruises, blemishes, and spots.
 - Product should not be shriveled, slimy, or moldy.
 - Flesh should feel firm to the touch, not mushy or hard.
 - Leaves on leafy items should be crisp, not mushy or brown.
 - Food items should have a fresh aroma, no sour or unpleasant odors.

See Appendix pages 74 and 75 for evaluation scorecards for salads, fresh fruits, and fresh fruit menu items.

Quality Score Card for Salads				
Date _____	Name of Menu Item _____			
Priority Prepared by _____				
Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard. NO when it does not. Make any necessary changes when a food item does not meet a standard. Use the Comments section to explain why it does not meet a standard.				
Remember: If a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.				
Quality Standard				
Acceptable				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Bright color typical of the item.Bright color typical of whole fruit ingredients.Whole fruit ingredients are not dry or excessively wet.Salad ingredients are even pieces.Salad ingredients appear crisp and limp.Salad ingredients appear appropriate for the salad.Salad is whole and not shredded.				
Tear-off Comments				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Salad ingredients are crisp, not soggy.Most or all whole salads are tender but not mushy.				
Rejection				
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Salad ingredients have a foul, distinctive flavor.Salad ingredients are not fresh.Salad ingredients enhance the salad but are not necessary for taste.A choice of either another type of salad dressing or a different salad.				
Service Temperature				
M-204				

If the food does NOT meet the quality standards, you should do the following:

- Substitute another food item on the service line. Follow the school district's policy on substitutions.
- If the product does not meet quality standards for fresh service, trimming may make it acceptable for use in a cooked product such as soup, to avoid waste.
- Determine the cause of the poor quality, and put procedures in place to avoid or correct the problem.

QUALITY OF FOOD AND QUALITY OF SERVICE

Receiving, Storage, and Preparation



Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

Receiving and Storing Fresh Produce

Checking Delivery Temperature

Fresh produce should be delivered to the school in enclosed refrigerated trucks. Refrigerated produce should have an internal temperature of 33 to 41 °F. These requirements should be included in the purchasing specifications.

Take the temperature between the refrigerated produce bags or cases when they are received. The temperature of the packages is critical to quality because the produce is ready for use.

TIP: Refer to
Quality Food for
Quality Meals for
more information
on receiving and
storage.



Storing Fresh Produce

- Use a stem-type thermometer to be sure the temperature is 41 °F or below. If the temperature probe damages the product, use that package first.
 - If the temperature of the product is too low or too high, follow the school district's procedure for receiving and rejecting produce.
- Date produce upon receiving and note "Best if Used By" date to ensure First-In, First-Out (FIFO).
 - Upon delivery, immediately store the bags in the coldest part of the refrigerator or cooler. Fresh-cut produce loses half its shelf life when it is stored above 40 °F.
 - For maximum quality, store refrigerated produce between 34-36 °F with a relative humidity between 85 and 90 percent. DO NOT FREEZE.
 - Provide good air circulation around produce. Precut produce requires special handling.
 - Precut produce should be purchased in quantities that can be used within 5 school days in order to remain at the peak of quality.
 - Do not remove the bags from the refrigerator until it is time to prepare the salad. Precut produce is packaged in air-controlled bags to ensure quality and freshness.
 - Once the seal on the precut produce bag has been broken, the product should be used as quickly as possible.

Store nonrefrigerated produce such as bananas, tomatoes, and potatoes at room temperature.



Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

Preparing Salad Items

Quality Salad Preparation:

1. Prepare all salads according to a standardized recipe. The manager uses a recipe to determine what ingredients will be included in a salad and then provides that information to the person preparing the salad.
2. Keep all salad ingredients chilled in the refrigerator until time for preparation. Refrigerate fresh greens for several hours to develop crispness.
3. Before preparing, all fresh produce should be washed thoroughly under cold running tap water to remove any lingering dirt. Scrub firm produce, such as apples and potatoes, with a brush. Do not wash with detergent or soap because these could produce residues a person could absorb when eating. Washing is still recommended for pre-cleaned, trimmed produce. **Do not soak fresh produce because important nutrients can be lost in the water.**
4. Cut fresh produce in large pieces to help minimize the loss of nutrients.
 - For salad ingredients prepared in large quantities, use:
Vertical cutter mixer or VCM
Commercial food processor or chopper
Cutter/slicer attachment of the mixer
Slicer
 - For salad ingredients prepared in small quantities, use:
Sharp knife
Designated cutting board
5. Some fruits turn brown when the cut surface is exposed to air. These include apples, avocados, bananas, pears, and peaches. They should be cut with a sharp, stainless steel knife and then dropped into pineapple, orange, or diluted lemon juice. A variety of commercial products can also be used to prevent browning. See the included "Culinary Techniques" CD-ROM for a fun training activity.
6. Utensils, equipment, and work surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water, and then sanitized, between jobs. Sanitize with 2 fluid ounces (4 tablespoons) of regular household chlorine bleach to 1 gallon of water. This solution is good only for up to 2 hours. Store wiping cloth in the sanitizing solution between cleaning.



Correct Way to Clean Salad Greens:

- Wash as close as possible to meal service.
- Strip away any outer leaves that may seem coarse and unsuitable for final presentation.
- For iceberg lettuce, remove the core before you clean it. To remove the core, firmly strike the core of the head of lettuce on a hard surface, then remove the core whole.



Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

- Wash head of lettuce by running water in the hollow left by the core. Do not soak heads of lettuce since the leaves absorb water. Place in a colander to drain with the core down. Remove the leaves and stack or nest six to seven leaves to a pile.
- For salad greens with loose leaves, separate the leaves and wash under cool running water. Do not soak.
- Drain all salad ingredients thoroughly so no water collects in the bottom of the storage container.
- Store all washed salad greens in plastic bags or plastic containers with a fitted cover.



Kitchen and Cafeteria Considerations

Preparation Areas and Equipment – What Do I Need to Process Fresh Fruits and Vegetables?

When designing your preparation area and identifying your equipment needs, consider these factors:

- *Can the staff transfer fresh fruits and vegetables from the receiving point to the serving point as efficiently as possible?*
- *Does the design enhance employee productivity and safety?*
- *Can the staff provide a quality and safe product to be served to the customer?*



The menu and various forms of produce that are purchased determine the designated preparation area and preparation equipment for a facility. In the past, all fresh produce had to be cleaned, peeled, and trimmed in the facility. Today, however, much fresh produce is purchased already cleaned, trimmed, and, in some instances, preportioned. This allows for a smaller preparation area and less equipment.

The following are suggestions for preparation areas and equipment. Your needs will vary depending on the kinds and forms of fresh fruits and vegetables you receive.

Location of Preparation Areas:

Fresh unprocessed fruits and vegetables: prepare near the receiving area, storage rooms, and refrigerators.

Salads: prepare near the refrigerators for the serving lines.

Preparation Equipment:

- Preparation sink - A separate two-compartment sink is recommended to clean and prepare fresh produce. The sink should be NSF approved or equivalent. The NSF mark certifies that the product has met specific safety standards established by the National Sanitation Foundation.

Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

- Food waste disposer or space for a garbage can
- Reach-in refrigerator or walk-in cooler
- Worktables, preferably stainless steel
- Mobile cart
- Chopper and cutter
- Knives
- Peeler, electric or hand, if needed
- Cutting boards, color-coded for specific use
- Thermometers and temperature logs for coolers and produce
- Disposable plastic gloves



Central Kitchen -- What Do I Consider When Serving Fresh Fruits and Vegetables from a Central Location?

Preparation areas and equipment needs may vary when you are transporting meals from a central kitchen to satellite kitchens. A central kitchen is used to receive and store food orders and prepare meals. The prepared meals are transported to the satellite or receiving kitchens. However, a limited amount of food preparation may be done at the satellite kitchen. In addition, vendors may deliver some foods, such as fresh produce, to the satellite kitchen. Answer the following questions to help you decide how much fresh produce can be received and/or prepared at the central and satellite kitchens:

- *Do the purchasing specifications require a certain degree of ripeness to allow for storage at the central kitchen and then transportation to the receiving kitchens?*
- *Does the central kitchen have adequate refrigerated storage space for holding fresh fruits and vegetables prior to transporting to satellite or receiving kitchens?*
- *Is there a trained person to evaluate the quality and condition of fresh produce when it is delivered to the central kitchen or to the satellite or receiving kitchens?*
- *Will all of the fresh produce be delivered directly to the central kitchen?*
- *Will some or all of the fresh produce be delivered directly to the receiving kitchens?*
- *How much preparation will be done at the central kitchen?*
- *How much preparation or assembly of the meal will be done at the satellite or receiving kitchens?*
- *Do the satellite or receiving kitchens have the equipment and labor to "prep" the fresh fruits and vegetables?*

Whether the decision is to receive, store, and prepare all or some of the fresh fruits and vegetables at the central kitchen or at the receiving kitchens, school districts must have procedures that ensure only safe, quality products are served to students.

Receiving, Storage, and Preparation

Refrigerated Storage – What Will I Need to Keep Fresh Fruits and Vegetables at Optimal Quality?

Basically, to store fresh fruits and vegetables, you need a refrigerated storage area and a cool storage area. The amount of storage you need depends on your menu, the number of meals you prepare, and the amount and the forms of produce you order.

Cold Storage – Lower than 41 °F

Types of refrigerators include walk-in, reach-in, and pass-through.

- **Walk-in refrigerators** should be located near the receiving areas. Fresh fruits and vegetables that require cold storage can be placed here immediately upon delivery.
- **Reach-in refrigerators** are ideal in the preparation area for fresh fruits and vegetables. The fresh produce can be stored here during and after preparation to ensure quality and safety of the food items.
- **Pass-through refrigerators** are usually located in back of the serving line and are convenient to store prepared food items and allow cafeteria staff to replenish the serving lines easily from the kitchen. This ensures that fresh produce is refrigerated at all times.

You can select solid metal doors, glass doors, or a combination of the two. Generally, refrigerators with glass doors are used on the serving lines to showcase the food items, such as prepared salads.

Cool Dry Storage – 60 to 70 °F

A cool storage room or area should be used to store produce such as bananas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, potatoes, and dry onions. It should be a dark, dry, and well-ventilated area. Produce must be stored at least 6 inches off the floor for proper ventilation. As with refrigerators, cool storage temperatures should be monitored several times a day and documented in a temperature logbook.

Preparing and Serving Vegetables and Fruits

Preparation and presentation are just as important for prepared vegetables and fruits as they are for fresh produce. Attracting students' attention to select and consume these items is your goal.



Preparing and Serving



Cooked Vegetables

To maximize vegetable quality, always cook vegetables just in time to serve or batch cook for service on the line. Cooked vegetables are best when they are held less than 20 minutes.

Always evaluate food before placing it on the service line. (Use the Quality Scorecard for Cooked Vegetables, Appendix p. 77).

When Quality Falls Short:

- Substitute with a similar food.
- Prior to reusing, verify that food was cooked and maintained at 140 °F.
- If the vegetable can be saved, use it in another dish to avoid waste.
- Find out what went wrong and correct the mistake for the next preparation.

Cooking to Maintain Safety

Cook to at least 140 °F

Cooking to Maintain Nutrients

- Cook vegetables in the smallest amount of liquid possible.
- Cook vegetables in the shortest amount of time for the desired tenderness.
- Cook most vegetables with a lid.
- For vegetables that have a skin, scrub well and cook with the skin on whenever possible. If the vegetable must be peeled, peel as thinly as possible.
- When vegetables are cut, use a sharp blade and cut in the largest pieces that are desirable for the recipe. Pieces should be uniform to allow for even cooking.
- Follow the recipe or directions for cooking a vegetable.
- Cook vegetables just in time to serve on the line – batch or staggered cooking.



Cooking to Maintain Quality of Appearance, Texture, and Flavor

- **Green vegetables** – The color is adversely affected by heat and acid.
 - Cook only until crisp-tender; overcooking will produce a dull olive-green or yellow product.
 - An acid such as lemon juice should never be added to a green vegetable during cooking to avoid the color change.
 - Never add baking soda to green vegetables. While it makes the green color brighter, it destroys important nutrients and can make the vegetables slimy.
- **Orange and yellow vegetables** – The color is more stable than in green vegetables. Cook only until crisp-tender.
- **Red vegetables** – Add a small amount of acid (lemon juice or vinegar) to beets or red cabbage to enhance color and flavor.
- **White vegetables** – Cook in a liquid that is neutral or slightly acidic, covered, to retain the color.

Preparing and Serving

All vegetables should be cooked so they are enticing to your customers and have the appropriate texture and flavor. Follow the recipe for the exact cooking time.

- Vegetables in the cabbage family (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower) develop a very strong, sulfur-like flavor when overcooked.
- Use as little water as possible for cooking most vegetables. Too much water will dilute the flavor. Steam if possible.

Frozen Vegetables

- Remember, these products are already partially cooked. Handle with care!
- DO NOT thaw loosely packed frozen vegetables, such as corn.
- Partially thaw lightly packed vegetables, such as broccoli spears.
- Fully thaw tightly packed vegetables, such as spinach or kale, and corn-on-the-cob.
- COOK until crisp-tender.
- BATCH COOK just in time for meal service.



Canned Vegetables

- Remember, these products are fully cooked during the canning process. Handle with care!
- Heat in the canning liquid to preserve nutrients.
- Heat only enough to bring to the desired temperature of 140 °F.
- BATCH COOK just in time for meal service.

NOTE: Refer to the section on preparing salad bar ingredients (page 21) for information on preparing fresh vegetables.

Fruits

Preparing to Maintain Nutrients

- Use fresh fruits at their peak of ripeness.
- Wash fresh fruits under cool running water immediately before they are peeled or stemmed.
- Cut fresh fruits in the largest pieces that are acceptable for serving.
- Avoid crushing fruit during preparation.
- Follow the recipe or directions for preparing a fruit dish.



Preparing to Maintain Quality

- Prepare fruit dishes that are eye-appealing. Follow the recipe or directions for preparing a fruit to maintain the correct color and shape of the fruit pieces.
- Prepare fruit dishes so they have the appropriate texture.
- Prepare fruit dishes for good flavor typical of the main fruit ingredients.
- Do not overpower main fruit flavor with other ingredients, such as spices.

Preparing and Serving

Preparing to Maintain Freshness of Fresh, Frozen, and Canned Fruit

- Use fresh fruit at the peak of ripeness.
- Thaw frozen fruit in the refrigerator, and use immediately when thawed.
- Maintain canned fruit in a storeroom at 50 °F to 70 °F and use before 1 year. Rotate canned fruit to ensure First-In, First-Out (FIFO) use.
- Chill canned fruit before it is added to a cold fruit dish.
- Store dried fruit in airtight containers to maintain freshness.
- When adding spices to a fruit recipe, follow the recipe exactly to have the best flavor.
- Fruit juice should be kept at or below 41 °F. Cover juice after pouring.
- Pasteurized juice should be used.

Meeting Meal Pattern Requirements



Meeting Requirements

Food-Based Menu Planning Approaches

Specific Requirements:

1. Two or more servings of different vegetables and/or fruits must be served at lunch and/or supper.
2. A serving must be at least 1/8 cup.

Cooked dried beans and peas may count as a vegetable if not used to meet the meat/meat alternate requirement in a reimbursable meal.



A juice product must contain at least 50 percent full-strength juice to be counted as a vegetable/fruit component in a reimbursable meal.



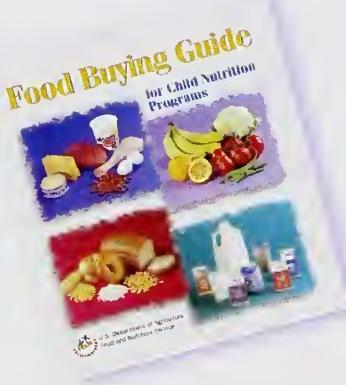
Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice may not meet more than 1/2 of the total requirement for lunch or supper. However, full-strength juice may be used to meet the total requirement for breakfast or as one component of a snack. (Juice may not be counted as one of the snack components if milk is the only other component.)



“Mixture items,” such as fruit cocktail and mixed vegetables, only count as 1 vegetable/fruit serving.

TIP:

Refer to USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs, Revised 2000, for additional information on the crediting of vegetables and fruits.



Large combination vegetable/fruit salads, containing at least 3/4 cup or more of 2 or more different vegetables/fruits with a meat/meat alternate such as a chef's salad or a fruit plate with cottage cheese are considered as 2 or more servings of the vegetable/fruit component and will meet the full requirement. If only two vegetables/fruits are included in the salad, the second must contain a minimum of 1/8 cup vegetable/fruit.

Crediting of Vegetables and Fruits:

- A serving of “canned vegetable” is considered to be drained.
- A serving of “raw vegetable” used in salads with dressing must contain 1/4-cup raw vegetable (pieces, shredded, chopped).
- A serving of “canned or cooked fruit” must include the juice or syrup in which the fruit is packed.
- A serving of “thawed frozen fruit” consists of fruit plus the juice or syrup that accumulates during thawing.

Meeting Requirements

Nutrient Standard/Assisted Nutrient Standard Menu Planning Approaches

Specific requirements:

- Serving sizes of vegetables and fruits must be the same planned portion sizes as on the menus.
- Serving sizes of vegetables and fruits must be what are analyzed and evaluated in meeting the weekly nutrient standards for the appropriate age/grade of students.
- Serving instructions and utensils must be the same as indicated on standardized recipes.
- Foods served must be what are planned and nutrient-analyzed except for last-minute substitutions that fall within the 2-week window. Schools or school districts must document the substitutions and the date they knew of the need for a substitution.



Offer Versus Serve

Offer versus Serve (OVS) allows students to decline a certain number of food items in the meals. The objectives of OVS are to reduce plate waste and encourage schools to offer more food choices.



When implementing OVS, reimbursable meals must contain a certain number and combination of food/menu items based on the meal planning option that is selected. These items must be offered to students before the point-of-service count.

Resource

A *Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals* can provide additional information on Offer versus Serve. Order this resource from USDA's Team Nutrition Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/NTISform.html.

Cashier Identification of a Reimbursable Meal

Cashiers must be able to identify reimbursable meals at the point of service.

For all menu planning options, cashiers must know:

- the daily menus,
- the planned portion size of each food item on the menus, and
- the specific food/menu items and combinations of food/menu items that will make up the reimbursable meal.



Self-Service Food and Salad Bars

"Stand-Alone" or Complete Serving Line

Self-serve food bars that are complete serving lines require:

- a cashier at the point of service,
- a separate monitor or restock person.

Meeting Requirements

Part of the Regular or Main Serving Line

Self-service food bars that are part of the regular or main serving line and are not stand-alone lines must be placed before the cashier at the point of service. This ensures that the students receive reimbursable meals when the food bars are included as food items/menu items on regular or main serving line menus.



Portion Control

Often the big questions are: "Did the student receive the appropriate serving size?" and "Do we have enough of a food item to last to the end of the meal period?" Portion control is the procedure to ensure positive answers to these questions. Using the correct serving utensil and preportioned food items are ways to implement portion control.

Serving Utensils

Scoops or dishers, ladles, and measuring-serving spoons of standard sizes are fairly dependable measures for portioning food by volume, and serving food quickly.

Refer to Appendix page 78 for information on serving utensils. For additional information, refer to *The Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, Revised 2000, Pages. I-43 to I-45.

Self-Serve Salad Bars

Self-serve salad bars and serving lines present a unique situation because students determine the serving size, not a cafeteria staff member. By using portioning utensils, the students generally will take the planned portion size along with the total required for the vegetable and fruit items to be creditable. The key to success is to encourage the students to take what they can eat and eat what they take. Generally, the case is that students take more than adequate amounts. Educating students and teachers on salad bar use is important.



Preportioned Food Items

An option to control portions is to preportion or prepackage vegetables and fruits on the serving line and on the salad bar.

While this is very labor intensive in preparation, the labor is reduced on the serving line. There is less need for monitoring of students and cleaning of the bar. Do a cost analysis to determine which is more beneficial.

On self-serve food bars, prepackaged fresh vegetables and fruits are more sanitary, with a reduced risk of cross-contamination from customers.



Food Safety

Every action in foodservice can potentially affect the safety of food, during the purchasing, storage, preparation, holding, service, or cleanup. Poor personal hygiene, allowing food to remain in the temperature danger zone too long, and cross-contamination are the three main causes of a foodborne illness.

Food Safety



Foodservice staff should understand:

- a foodborne illness can occur in any foodservice operation,
- trained staff who practice safe and sanitary procedures in handling food at all stages are critical to keeping foods safe, and
- students and adults must be educated on sanitation procedures such as hand-washing before meals, using utensils for self-serve items, and not tasting food while on a serving line.

Resources

- *Serving It Safe: A Manager's Tool Kit* is an excellent training resource on food safety and sanitation. It provides specific information such as temperature guidelines for safely receiving, storing, preparing, and handling leftovers, etc.
- *Food Safety: It's in Your Hands* is a 2-hour satellite teleconference videotape that addresses issues relating to food safety and the prevention of foodborne illness including identifying food safety hazards, avoiding cross-contamination, personal hygiene, and hand washing.

Both of the above resources are available from the National Food Service Management Institute. Contact them at 800-321-3054 or visit their Web site at www.nfsmi.org to order these resources if you do not already have them.

- FDA Food Code, 2001 edition.



Appendices

Quality Score Card for Salads

Quality Score Card for Fresh Fruits and Fresh Fruit Menu Items

Quality Score Card for Baked Fruits and Fruit Desserts

Quality Score Card for Cooked Vegetables

Utensil Poster

Appendix

Quality Score Card for Salads

Date _____	Name of Menu Item _____			
Proudly Prepared by _____				
Quality Scored by _____				
Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.				
<i>Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.</i>				
Quality Standard	Yes	No	NA	Comments
Appearance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bright color typical of the fresh greens• Bright color typical of other fresh ingredients (no discoloration)• Salad appears moist, not dry or excessively wet• Salad ingredients are even pieces• Salad ingredients appear crisp, not limp• Garnish is edible and appropriate for the salad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Texture or Consistency <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salad ingredients are crisp, not soggy• Meat or pasta/rice salads are tender but not mushy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Flavor <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salad ingredients have a fresh, distinctive flavor• Seasonings enhance the salad but are not too salty or too tart• A choice of lowfat and/or fat-free salad dressings is available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Service Temperature <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 34°-38 °F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix

Quality Score Card for Fresh Fruits and Fresh Fruit Menu Items

Date _____	Name of Menu Item _____			
Proudly Prepared by _____				
Quality Scored by _____				
<p>Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.</p> <p><i>Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.</i></p>				
Quality Standard	Yes	No	NA	Comments
Appearance				
• Color is typical of the ripe fruit(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Color is fresh (not marred by discoloration from oxidation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Fruit pieces are similar in size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Fruit pieces are intact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Garnish is edible and appropriate for the dish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Texture or Consistency				
• Fruit is at the peak of ripeness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• All pieces of fruit have the same texture	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Flavor and seasoning				
• Fruits have a pleasing, slightly sweet, ripe flavor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• If seasonings have been used, they are detectable but not overpowering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• Seasonings enhance the fruit flavor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• If a dressing or sauce is used, it complements the fruit (mild, not overpowering)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Service Temperature				
• Chilled – 34°-38 °F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix

Quality Score Card for Baked Fruits and Fruit Desserts

Date _____ Name of Menu Item _____

Proudly Prepared by _____

Quality Scored by _____

Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark **YES** when the food meets the standard and **NO** when it does not. Mark **NA** (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the **Comments** section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.

Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.

Quality Standard	Yes	No	NA	Comments
Appearance <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fruit pieces are similar in size• Fruit pieces are intact• Garnish is edible and appropriate for the dish• Pastry or topping has a golden brown color• Pastry has a blistery surface	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Texture or Consistency <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All pieces of the fruit have the same texture• Pastry has a flaky or mealy texture• Pastry cuts easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Flavor and Seasoning <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fruits have a pleasing, slightly sweet, ripe flavor• If seasonings have been used, they are detectable but not overpowering• Seasonings enhance the fruit flavor• Pastry has a pleasant, bland flavor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Service Temperature <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pastry desserts – 60°-70 °F• Hot baked fruit – 160°-180 °F	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Quality Score Card for Cooked Vegetables

Date _____	Name of Menu Item _____			
Proudly Prepared by _____				
Quality Scored by _____				
<p>Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the Comments section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.</p> <p><i>Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the service line.</i></p>				
Quality Standard	Yes	No	NA	Comments
Appearance				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bright color typical of the vegetable • Vegetable pieces are similar in size • Vegetable pieces are intact (pieces are not overcooked with a mushy appearance) • There is no visible oil or fat • Garnish is edible and appropriate for the dish 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Texture or Consistency				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable is fork-tender (slightly crisp and not overcooked) • All pieces of the vegetable have the same texture • Vegetables in casserole-type recipes are well blended, tender, and identifiable 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Flavor and Seasoning				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetable has a definite, good flavor • Seasonings are detectable but not overpowering • Seasonings enhance the vegetable flavor • A minimal amount of salt has been added (recipe used) • A minimal amount or no fat has been added (recipe used) • If a sauce is used, it complements the vegetable (mild, not overpowering) 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Service Temperature				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 160°-180 °F 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Appendix

Scoops (Dishers)



Size/No. ¹	Level Measure	Color Code ²
6	2/3 cup	
8	1/2 cup	
10	3/8 cup	
12	1/3 cup	
16	1/4 cup	
20	3-1/3 Tbsp	
24	2-2/3 Tbsp	
30	2 Tbsp	
40	1-2/3 Tbsp	
50	3-3/4 tsp	
60	3-1/4 tsp	
70	2-3/4 tsp	
100	2 tsp	

¹ Scoops are left or right hand or squeeze type that can be used for both hands. Number on the scoop indicates how many level scoopfuls make one quart. For example, eight No. 8 scoops = 1 quart.



² Use colored dots matching the brand-specific color coding of scoop sizes.

Ladles Portion Servers

Ladle fl oz	Approx Measure	Portion Server fl oz
1 oz	1/8 cup	1 oz
2 oz	1/4 cup	2 oz
3 oz	3/8 cup	3 oz
4 oz	1/2 cup	4 oz
6 oz	3/4 cup	6 oz
8 oz	1 cup	8 oz
12 oz	1-1/2 cups	—

Ladles and portion servers (measuring-serving spoons that are volume-standardized) are labeled "oz." "Fl oz" would be more accurate since they measure volume, not weight.

Use ladles for serving soups, stews, creamed dishes, sauces, gravies, and other liquid products.

Use portion servers (solid or perforated) for portioning solids and semi-solids such as fruits and vegetables, cookie dough, and condiments.

Cooking or Serving Spoons



Spoons vary in length (11", 13", 15", 18", 21") for ease of use in cooking or serving. Spoons can have plastic handles that are heat-resistant. Level scoops, ladles, and portion servers provide more accurate portion control than serving spoons that are not volume-standardized measure.

Specialty Spoons



A thumb notch on a server or spoon handle prevents the spoon from slipping into the pan and prevents hands from sliding into the food. Triple-edge (solid or perforated) spoons have a flat edge that increases the area where the spoon touches the bottom of the pan when stirring.

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR WINDOWS

Insert the CD-ROM in the CD drive. The Installation Wizard program will run automatically. Follow the on-screen instructions to complete the installation. You need to decide if you want to install the program on your local system or if you will run it from the CD.

If you choose Run from CD, you must have the CD-ROM disk in your CD drive every time you want to run the "Cooking With Flair" program. This option requires very little disk space on your computer.

If you choose Install to My Computer, all the program and media files will be copied to the machine. You can use the program simultaneously on several machines using this option. The drawback is that it requires about 500 MB of free disk space. However, installing the files on your computer will result in marginally faster program performance.

If you choose to install the program on your computer, you can specify a location on any accessible drive or network, provided there is disk space available. Use the browse button to specify the installation location. The program will be installed in your Programs directory if you don't specify an alternative.

When installation is complete, you will be alerted and then the "Cooking with Flair" program will start automatically.

During installation, a shortcut to the program will be placed on your desktop and will also be added to your Program groups in the Start menu. Use these shortcuts to launch the lesson after initial setup.

TO CHANGE OR REMOVE THE INSTALLATION

If you want to remove the program and its associated files from your system, use the "Add/Remove Programs" option under Control Panel in the Settings directory. If you want to change the installation (for example, if you chose to run the program from the CD during installation but later want to install it on your system), you must first uninstall the previous installation before installing it a second time.

MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- 486/66 or higher processor, including Intel Pentium processor
- Windows 95/98, or Windows NT 4 or higher
- 8 MB RAM required (16 MB or more recommended)
- 600x800 screen resolution with Thousands of Colors (16-bit high color recommended)
- Sound Card

INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR MACINTOSH

TO RUN "COOKING WITH FLAIR" DIRECTLY FROM THE CD

Insert the CD into the CD-ROM Drive. Double click the Fruits, Salads, and Vegetables folder. Double click the START icon; the program will begin.

TO INSTALL "COOKING WITH FLAIR" ONTO YOUR HARD DRIVE OR NETWORK

Insert the CD into the CD-ROM Drive. Drag the Fruits, Salads, and Vegetables folder to your hard disk or other accessible network drive. You will need about 450 MB of free disk space to install all program components. Double click the folder title Fruits, Salads, and Vegetables. Double click the START icon; the program will begin.

TO SUPPORT PRINTING

Depending on other applications installed on your computers, you may need additional fonts for Adobe Acrobat Reader. To install Reader and its fonts:

Insert the CD into the CD-ROM Drive. Double click the Reader 3.02 Installer icon. Follow the onscreen instructions to install Adobe Acrobat Reader and its associated files.

TO SAVE NOTES AND PROGRESS INFORMATION

If you want to save progress information and notes between sessions you need to provide a 3.5" floppy disk. Before running the Culinary Techniques CD, insert the floppy disk into the disk drive and label it "Cooking With Flair" by retyping its name on the Macintosh desktop.

Insert this floppy disk each time you return to study the lesson to maintain your progress information.

TO REMOVE THE INSTALLATION

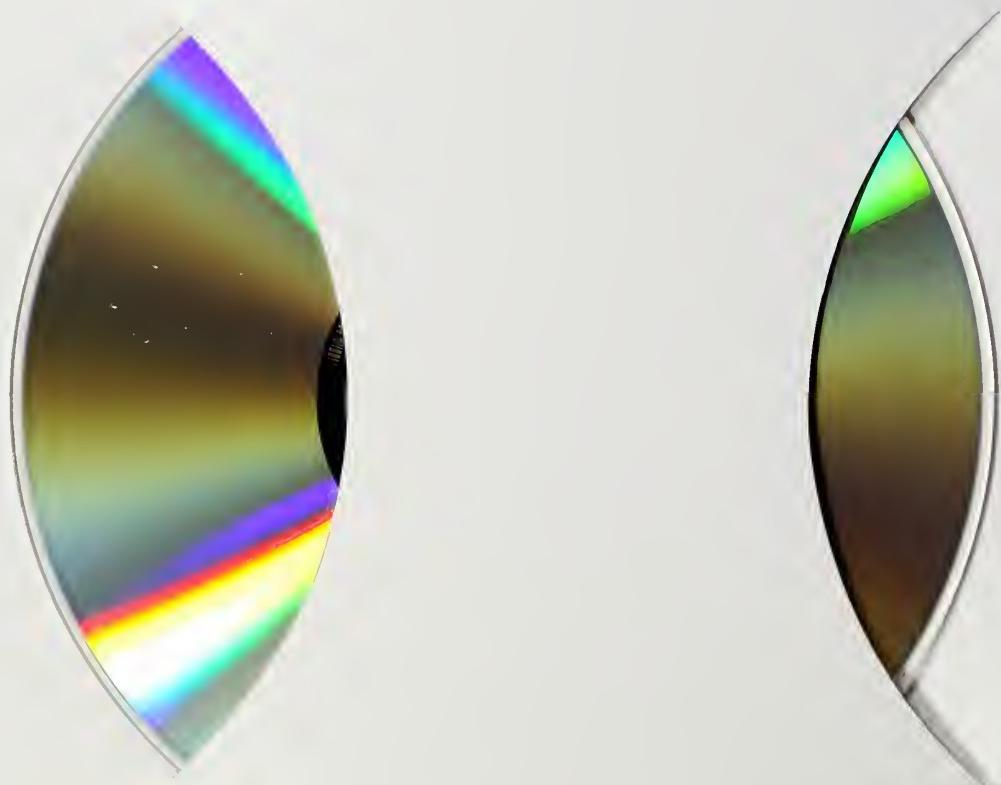
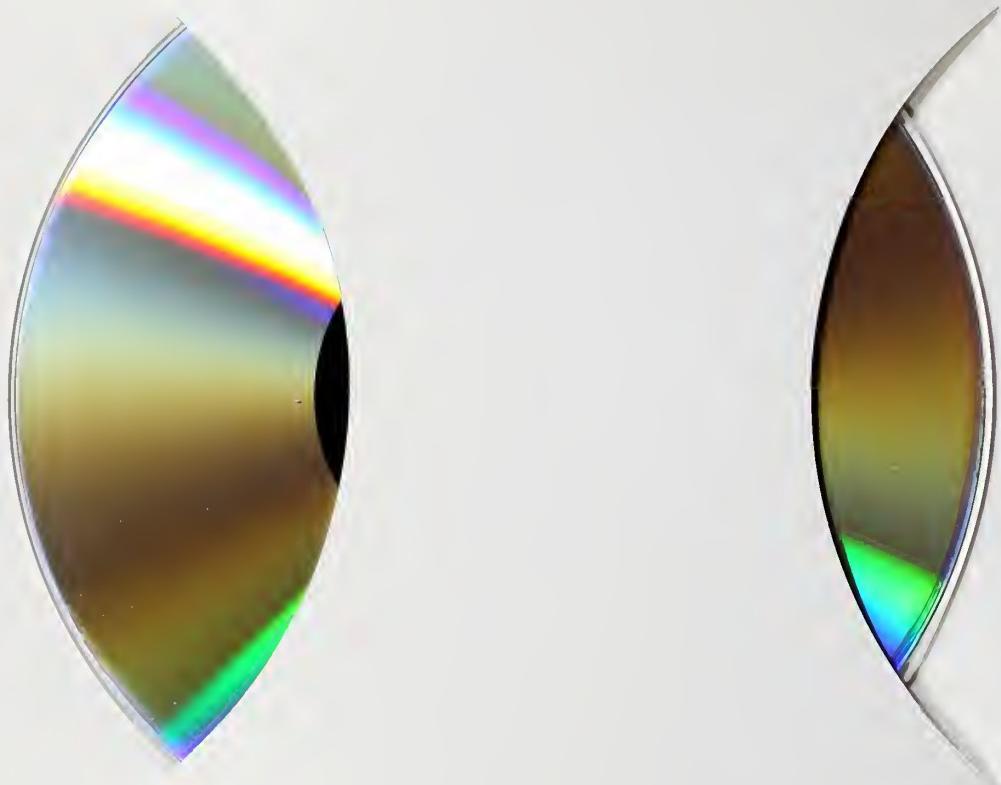
To remove the program, drag the Fruits, Salads, and Vegetables folder to the trash can.

MINIMUM SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- PowerPC or 68040 or greater
- System 7.5.1 or later
- 16 MB RAM required
- 800x600 resolution and 8-bit color (256 colors) monitor or higher
- CD-ROM Drive









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Produce for Better Health
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Center for Nutrition
Policy and Promotion



United Fresh Fruit and
Vegetable Association



Produce Marketing
Association





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